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# FAITH OR FACT

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ILLUSTRATING CONFLICTS BETWEEN CREDULITY AND VITALIZED  
THOUGHT; SUPERSTITION AND REALISM; TRADITION AND  
VERITY; DOGMA AND REASON; BIGOTRY AND TOLERANCE;  
ECCLESIASTICAL ERROR AND MANIFEST TRUTH; THEOLOGY  
AND RATIONALISM; MIRACLE AND IMMUTABLE LAW; PIOUS  
IGNORANCE AND SECULAR INTELLIGENCE; HYPOCRISY AND  
SINCERITY; THEOCRACY AND DEMOCRACY.

BY

HENRY M. TABER.

WITH PREFACE BY

COL. ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

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“— Faith, fanatic faith, once wedded fast  
To some dear falsehood, hugs it to the last.”—*Moore.*

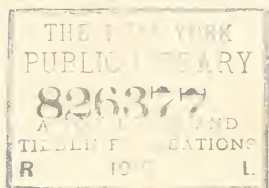
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## INTRODUCTION.

IN introducing *Faith or Fact* to my readers I wish to say that it is composed of a series of articles which have appeared from time to time, within the past seven years, in the *Freethought Magazine* of Chicago, and that I have yielded to the flattering solicitations of many of my best friends in placing this collection before the public in its present form.

I ask for a candid, unprejudiced judgment on my book, and nothing will give me greater pleasure than to have pointed out to me any error of fact into which I may have, inadvertently, been drawn ; my aim having been to search for and to record the truth.

It is significant that, in support of my positions, I furnish authorities mostly from *Christian* writers, the larger number whom being *clergymen*.

It appears to me that Christianity has invited criticism, if not censure, by reason of its inculcation of belief by faith alone regardless of opposing and incontrovertible fact ; by reason of its credulity, its superstitions, its intolerance ; of its arrogant pretensions ; its dogma of inspiration, of the fall of man, of eternal punishment, of the trinity, of the atonement, of a personal devil ; its pretended knowledge of the "unknowable," and of a future life ; its anathema of doubt ; its insistence upon unprovable miracles ; its antagonism to the later discoveries of science ; its conflict with civil liberty ; its injustice in the matter of exempting church property from taxation, and of its

persistence in the teaching of religion in the public schools ; its efforts in behalf of uniting the church with the state (even to the extent of christianizing the constitution of the United States)—thus endangering the very life of the nation ; its untruthful claim that there is authority (even on Christian grounds) for the religious observance of Sunday and its wrongful and tyrannical denial of innocent amusement on that day ; its assumption of superior wisdom, higher civilization and purer morality ; its unsupported claim to greater respect for the position of woman ; its false claim that Christianity is an original (and not a borrowed) religion ; its departure from the religion of Christ and its substituting therefor the religion of Paul, supplemented by that of the church fathers ; its unwarrantable claim that there is reliable evidences of answer to prayer ; its sometimes questionable methods in making converts to its doctrines. These, one and all, (and more than these) would seem to render Christianity amenable to careful enquiry and rigid scrutiny. When I speak of Christianity, I refer to the *orthodox* branch of that system of religion and *not* to the *true* followers of Christ, who reject the unbelievable dogmas of that (the larger) branch of the Christian church.

HENRY M. TABER.

*May, 1897.*

## PREFACE BY ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

I LIKE to know the thoughts, theories and conclusions of an honest, intelligent man ; candor is always charming, and it is a delight to feel that you have become acquainted with a sincere soul.

I have read this book with great pleasure, not only because I know and greatly esteem the author, not only because he is my unwavering friend, but because it is full of good sense, of accurate statement, of sound logic, of exalted thoughts happily expressed, and for the further reason that it is against tyranny, superstition, bigotry, and every form of injustice, and in favor of every virtue.

Henry M. Taber, the author, has for many years taken great interest in religious questions. He was raised in an orthodox atmosphere, was acquainted with many eminent clergymen from whom he endeavored to find out what Christianity is—and the facts and evidence relied on to establish the truth of the creeds. He found that the clergy of even the same denomination did not agree—that some of them preached one way and talked another and that many of them seemed to regard the creed as something to be accepted whether it was believed or not. He found that each one gave his own construction to the dogmas that seemed heartless or unreasonable. While some insisted that the Bible was absolutely true and the creed without error, others admitted that there were mistakes in the sacred volume and that the creed

ought to be revised. Finding these differences among the ministers, the shepherds, and also finding that no one pretended to have any evidence except faith or any facts but assertions, he concluded to investigate the claims of Christianity for himself.

For half a century he has watched the ebb and flow of public opinion, the growth of science, the crumbling of creeds—the decay of the theological spirit, the waning influence of the orthodox pulpit, the loss of confidence in special providence and the efficacy of prayer.

He has lived to see the church on the defensive—to hear faith asking for facts—and to see the shot and shell of science batter into shapelessness the fortresses of superstition. He has lived to see infidels, blasphemers and agnostics the leaders of the intellectual world. In his time the supernaturalists have lost the sceptre and have taken their places in the abject rear.

Fifty years ago the orthodox Christians believed their creeds. To them the Bible was an actual revelation from God. Every word was true. Moses and Joshua were regarded as philosophers and scientists. All the miracles and impossibilities recorded in the Bible were accepted as facts. Credulity was the greatest of virtues. Everything, except the reasonable, was believed, and it was considered wickedly presumptuous to doubt anything except facts. The reasonable things in the Bible could safely be doubted, but to deny the miracles was like the sin against the Holy Ghost. In those days the preachers were at the helm. They spoke with authority. They knew the origin and destiny of the soul. They were on familiar terms with the Trinity—the three-headed God. They knew the narrow path that led to heaven and the great highway along which the multitude were traveling to the Prison of Pain.

While these reverend gentlemen were busy trying to prevent the development of the brain and to convince the people that the good in this life were miserable, that virtue wore a crown of thorns and carried a cross, while the wicked and ungodly walked in the sunshine of joy, yet that after death the wicked would be eternally tortured and the good eternally rewarded. According to their pious philosophy the good God punished virtue, and rewarded vice, in this world—and in the next, rewarded virtue and punished vice.

These divine truths filled their hearts with holy peace—with pious resignation. It would be difficult to determine which gave them the greater joy—the hope of heaven for themselves, or the certainty of hell for their enemies. For the grace of God they were fairly thankful, but for his “justice” their gratitude was boundless. From the heights of heaven they expected to witness the eternal tragedy in hell.

While these good divines, these doctors of divinity, were busy misinterpreting the Scriptures, denying facts and describing the glories and agonies of eternity, a good many other people were trying to find out something about this world. They were busy with retort and crucible, searching the heavens with the telescope, examining rocks and craters, reefs and islands, studying plant and animal life, inventing ways to use the forces of nature for the benefit of man, and in every direction searching for the truth. They were not trying to destroy religion or to injure the clergy. Many of them were members of churches and believed the creeds. The facts they found were honestly given to the world. Of course all facts are the enemies of superstition. The clergy, acting according to the instinct of self-preservation, denounced these “facts” as dangerous and the persons who found and published them as infidels and scoffers. Theology was arrogant and bold.

Science was timid. For some time the churches seemed to have the best of the controversy. Many of the scientists surrendered and did their best to belittle the facts and patch up a cowardly compromise between Nature and Revelation—that is, between the true and the false.

Day by day more facts were found that could not be reconciled with the Scriptures, or the creeds. Neither was it possible to annihilate facts by denial. The man who believed the Bible could not accept the facts, and the man who believed the facts could not accept the Bible. At first, the Bible was the standard, and all facts inconsistent with that standard were denied. But in a little while science became the standard, and the passages in the Bible contrary to that standard had to be explained or given up. Great efforts were made to harmonize the mistakes in the Bible with the demonstrations of science. It was difficult to be ingenious enough to defend them both. The pious professors twisted and turned but found it hard to reconcile the creation of Adam with the slow development of man from lower forms. They were greatly troubled about the age of the Universe. It seemed incredible that until about six thousand years ago there was nothing in existence but God—and nothing. And yet they tried to save the Bible by giving new meanings to the inspired texts, and casting a little suspicion on the facts.

This course has mostly been abandoned, although a few survivals, like Mr. Gladstone, still insist that there is no conflict between Revelation and Science. But these champions of Holy Writ succeed only in causing the laughter of the intelligent and the amazement of the honest. The more intelligent theologians confessed that the inspired writers could not be implicitly believed. As they personally knew nothing of astronomy or geology and were forced to rely entirely on

inspiration, it is wonderful that more mistakes were not made. So it was claimed that Jehovah cared nothing about science, and allowed the blunders and mistakes of the ignorant people concerning everything except religion, to appear in his supernatural book as inspired truths.

The Bible, they said, was written to teach religion in its highest and purest form—to make mankind fit to associate with God and his angels. True, polygamy was tolerated and slavery established, yet Jehovah believed in neither, but on account of the wickedness of the Jews was in favor of both.

At the same time quite a number of real scholars were investigating other religions, and in a little while they were enabled to show that these religions had been manufactured by men—that their Christs and apostles were myths and that all their sacred books were false and foolish. This pleased the Christians. They knew that theirs was the only true religion and that their Bible was the only inspired book.

The fact that there is nothing original in Christianity, that all the dogmas, ceremonies and festivals had been borrowed, together with some mouldy miracles used as witnesses, weakened the faith of some and sowed the seeds of doubt in many minds. But the pious petrefactions, the fossils of faith, still clung to their book and creed. While they were quick to see the absurdities in other sacred books, they were either unconsciously blind or maliciously shut their eyes to the same absurdities in the Bible. They knew that Mohammed was an impostor, because the citizens of Mecca, who knew him, said he was, and they knew that Christ was not an impostor because the people of Jerusalem, who knew him, said he was. The same fact was made to do double duty. When they attacked other religions it was a sword and when their religion was attacked it became a shield.

The men who had investigated other religions turned their attention to Christianity. They read our Bible as they had read other sacred books. They were not blinded by faith or paralyzed by fear, and they found that the same arguments they had used against other religions destroyed our own.

But the real old-fashioned orthodox ministers denounced the investigators as infidels and denied every fact that was inconsistent with the creed. They wanted to protect the young and the feeble minded. They were anxious about the souls of the "thoughtless."

Some ministers changed their views just a little, not enough to be driven from their pulpits—but just enough to keep sensible people from thinking them idiotic. These preachers talked about the "higher criticism" and contended that it was not necessary to believe every word in the Bible, that some of the miracles might be given up and some of the books discarded. But the stupid doctors of divinity had the Bible and the creeds on their side and the machinery of the churches was in their control. They brought some of the offending clergymen to the bar, had them tried for heresy, made some recant and closed the mouths of others. Still, it was not easy to put the heretics down. The congregations of ministers found guilty often followed the shepherds. Heresy grew popular, the liberal preachers had good audiences, while the orthodox addressed a few bonnets, bibs and benches.

For many years the pulpit has been losing influence and the sacred calling no longer offers a career to young men of talent and ambition.

When people believed in "special providence," they also believed that preachers had great influence with God. They were regarded as celestial lobbyists and they were respected and feared because of their supposed power.



Now, no one who has the capacity to think, believes in special providence. Of course there are some pious imbeciles who think that pestilence and famine, cyclone and earthquake, flood and fire are the weapons of God, the tools of his trade, and that with these weapons, these tools, he kills and starves, rends and devours, drowns and burns countless thousands of the human race.

If God governs this world, if he builds and destroys, if back of every event is his will, then he is neither good nor wise. He is ignorant and malicious.

A few days ago, in Paris, men and women had gathered together in the name of Charity. The building in which they were assembled took fire and many of these men and women perished in the flames.

A French priest called this horror an act of God.

Is it not strange that Christians speak of their God as an assassin? How can they love and worship this monster who murders his children?

Intelligence seems to be leaving the orthodox church. The great divines are growing smaller, weaker, day by day. Since the death of Henry Ward Beecher no man of genius has stood in an orthodox pulpit. The ministers of intelligence are found in the liberal churches where they are allowed to express their thoughts and preserve their manhood. Some of these preachers keep their faces toward the East and sincerely welcome the light, while their orthodox brethren stand with their backs to the sunrise and worship the sunset of the day before.

During these years of change, of decay and growth, the author of this book looked and listened, became familiar with the questions raised, the arguments offered and the results obtained. For his work a better man could not have been found. He has no prejudice, no hatred. He is by nature

candid, conservative, kind and just. He does not attack persons. He knows the difference between exchanging epithets and thoughts. He gives the facts as they appear to him and draws the logical conclusions. He charges and proves that Christianity has not always been the friend of morality, of civil liberty, of wives and mothers, of free thought and honest speech. He shows that intolerance is its nature, that it always has, and always will persecute to the extent of its power, and that Christianity will always despise the doubter.

Yet we know that doubt must inhabit every finite mind. We know that doubt is as natural as hope, and that man is no more responsible for his doubts than for the beating of his heart. Every human being, who knows the nature of evidence, the limitations of the mind, must have "doubts" about gods and devils, about heavens and hells, and must know that there is not the slightest evidence tending to show that gods and devils ever existed.

God is a guess.

An undesigned designer, an uncaused cause, is as incomprehensible to the human mind as a circle without a diameter.

The dogma of the Trinity multiplies the difficulty by three.

Theologians do not, and cannot believe that the authority to govern comes from the consent of the governed. They regard God as the monarch, and themselves as his agents. They always have been the enemies of liberty.

They claim to have a revelation from their God, a revelation that is the rightful master of reason. As long as they believe this, they must be the enemies of mental freedom. They do not ask man to think, but command him to obey.

If the claims of the theologians are admitted, the church becomes the ruler of the world and to support and obey priests will be the business of mankind. All these theologians

claim to have a revelation from their God and yet they cannot agree as to what the revelation reveals. The other day, looking from my window at the bay of New York, I saw many vessels going in many directions, and yet all were moved by the same wind. The direction in which they were going did not depend on the direction of the breeze, but on the set of the sails. In this way the same Bible furnishes creeds for all the Christian sects. But what would we say if the captains of the boats I saw, should each swear that his boat was the only one that moved in the same direction the wind was blowing?

I agree with Mr. Taber that all religions are founded on mistakes, misconceptions and falsehoods and that superstition is the warp and woof of every creed.

This book will do great good. It will furnish arguments and facts against the supernatural and absurd. It will drive phantoms from the brain, fear from the heart, and many who read these pages will be emancipated, enlightened and ennobled.

Christianity, with its ignorant and jealous God—its loving and revengeful Christ—its childish legends—its grotesque miracles—its “fall of man”—its atonement—its salvation by faith—its heaven for stupidity and its hell for genius, does not and cannot satisfy the free brain and the good heart.

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

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## CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION AND CHRISTIAN MORALITY.

WE hear much of Christian civilization and of Christian morality! There is no *Christian* civilization or *Christian* morality, any more than there is Christian mathematics or Christian astronomy; though Christians seem to assume that they have a sort of monopoly of civilization and of morality, and that (as she is often called) "the great Christian nation!" England, is the great exemplar of all that is elevating, just and virtuous. What are the facts?

Is slavery a civilizing and moral institution? What is England's record in regard to it? Did she not foster the slave-trade and was not slavery maintained just so long as it was profitable to her? Jefferson, speaking of England's encouragement of the slave-trade, said: "This piratical warfare (the opprobrium of infidel powers) is the warfare of the *Christian* king of Great Britain."

In 1775, Lord Dartmouth (Secretary of State for the Colonies), one of the most conspicuous leaders of the *religious* world, said: "We cannot allow the Colonies to discourage a trade so beneficial to the nation." South Carolina, herself, among other colonies, remonstrated against the importation of slaves, but Acts of Parliament were passed prohibiting the state governors from assenting to any measures which should tend to restrict the slave-trade. (*See Lecky's History.*)

Is it civilizing and moral in its effects, to send rum and opium to (what Christian England calls) "the heathen?" Canon Farrar says "where the English have converted one Hindoo to Christianity, they have made one hundred drunkards."

Quoting the above, the *Christian at Work* adds, "Where the English have converted one Chinaman to Christianity they have made two hundred addicted to the opium habit." Bishop

Temple, of London, said recently, "Would to God that I might stir you all to indignation—fierce and holy—against the horrible mischief that English traders do in heathen lands."

Is robbery civilizing and moral?

Benjamin Franklin has said that "a highwayman is as much a robber when he plunders in a gang as when single, and a nation which makes an unjust war is only a great gang." What part of our globe is there where this highwayman of nations has not illustrated the robber maxim that "might makes right?""

Think of the devastations of countries, the destruction of property, the despoliation of homes, the sacrifice of life, the misery, poverty and tears, the wretchedness and woe, that have been caused; the widows and orphans that have been made; to appease what Theodore Parker has called, "the earth hunger of the Anglo-Saxons."

(The substance of what follows has been largely taken from a magazine of a recent year.) Can we mention a single instance in which England's relations with a weaker government have been characterized by that large and even justice which distinguishes the philanthropist from the trader?

Can we name China? Is it one of the glories of "free trade" that is recorded in the histories of the seven years of the wars of 1840 and 1857—of the occupancy of Hong Kong—of the forcible introduction into the empire of nine millions pounds sterling of opium every year?

Is it Spain, whose chief fortress was (in 1704) seized by England, at a time when peace existed between the two nations, and is retained—John Bright has told us—"contrary to every law of morality and honor?"

Is it India, of whose patient, dumb and famine-stricken people, even the very salt is taxed two thousand per cent., that England may prosecute Imperial wars, in which the Hindu has no voice?

Is it Afghanistan, struggling for its independence in resistance to what some of the greatest of England's statesmen have pronounced an utterly unjust and wicked war; but whose

voices were drowned by the popular clamor of men like Sir James Stephenson, who declared that "we are to decide according to our own interests?"

Is it Zululand, the first step of whose annexation has been taken by what has been called an unnecessary and criminal war?

Is it the Transvaal, whose Boers saw their cherished independence rudely trampled under foot, when it seemed to conflict with English interests?

Is it Bulgaria, to the atrocious butchery and outrage of whose inhabitants by the Turk, the English ambassador could be officially blind for the sake of "English interests?"

Is it Cape Colony (seized in 1652); Jamaica (in 1665); Canada (1759); Australia (1788); Malta (1798)? Is it Cyprus—Egypt—Abyssinia—Burmah?

All, against the protests of the wisest and noblest of England's heritage of true men, but whose remonstrances were powerless against the popular postulatam—as enunciated by a leading London newspaper—"the preservation of our rule in the highest moral law."

Besides all which, these immoral, cruel and unjust acts have exerted a demoralizing influence upon the English people themselves.

Says Andrew Carnegie, "Governmental interference of a so-called civilized power, in the affairs of the most barbarous tribe on earth, is injurious to that tribe not only, but never under any circumstances—can it prove beneficial for the intruder."

Benjamin Franklin has expressed the same thought, and accounts for this intruder's "deficiency of justice and morality" by her "oppressive conduct to her subjects and unjust wars on her neighbors?"

If the religion which asserts that "nations must answer for their sins" be true, then will England have a longer and blacker list of crimes to "answer" for than any nation in either ancient or modern times, for—as John S. C. Abbot, the historian, has said—"there is no nation in Christendom whose annals are stained with so many acts of unmitigated villainy as those of Great Britain."

## THE FAMOUS THIRTY-SIX INFIDELS.

**I**N the *New York Tribune* of November 9th, 1887, appeared a report of a sermon preached at Newburgh, by the Reverend George Henderson Smyth, minister of the Second Reformed Church of this city, in which sermon it was stated that many years ago there existed a society of thirty-six Infidels; that on one occasion they baptized a cat and gave communion to a dog, and that within a year from that time the entire membership of the society was exterminated by death. The report added that Grant B. Taylor, Esq., a lawyer of Newburgh, had investigated the statement and found it to be true.

This was so astounding a recital that I wrote to the last-named gentleman, saying that if it was true it ought to be spread wide as a warning to "Infidels." If not true, it ought promptly to be contradicted, in the interest of truth; and asking him to be kind enough to furnish authority therefor. In answer to this he referred me to "*The History of Orange County*, published by Evarts & Peck, of Philadelphia, page 267, *et seq.*;" adding that "Dr. John Johnston's life, therein referred to, has a full account of the affair."

I also wrote to Rev. G. Henderson Smyth a letter, similar to that written to Mr. Taylor, and in answer thereto Mr. Smyth referred me to a book called *Ad Fidem*, written by Rev. E. F. Burr, D. D., on reference to which I find it stated (page 259) in substance, that of this "Druidical (or Infidel) Society," one died a violent death the same day, one was found dead in bed the next day, one died in a fit three days after, one was frozen to death, two were starved to death, three died "accidentally," five committed suicide, seven were drowned, seven died on the gallows, eight were shot in all thirty-six.



Dr. Burr adds : “ In short, within five years (not one year, as Mr. Smyth stated) from the organization of the society, every one of the original thirty-six members died in some unnatural manner.”

Determining to press my inquiries still further, I wrote to the Rev. E. F. Burr, D. D. (at Lyme, Ct.), asking him to favor me with the source of his information on this matter. He replied that I could find the account in *Arvine's Cyclopedia of Moral and Religious Anecdote*.

Referring to this most remarkable collection of miraculous events ! I found substantially what Dr. Burr had stated, but without quoting a single authority. Rev. Dr. Arvine adds : “ Of the foregoing statement there is good proof ; they have been certified before Justices of the Peace in New York ; ” but the certificates (or affidavits) are (suspiciously) omitted from the record.

I have made every possible effort to ascertain the whereabouts—if living—of Dr. Arvine, or some corroboration of these extra-natural events, but without success. I have consulted, I believe, every known historical authority for information and proof of these marvelous statements.

In Evarts and Peck's *History of Orange County*, (to which Mr. Taylor referred me), a Society of Druids is mentioned, but the record is silent as to the amazing circumstances related by Mr. Smyth, except what is stated on the authority of Rev. Dr. John Johnston, viz : after mentioning the mock communion incident, Dr. J. is quoted as saying that “ the principle actor in this impious transaction did not long survive ; on the following Sabbath evening he was found convulsed with awful spasms, and died without being able to utter a word. (July 2d, 1799.) ”

Eager's *History of Orange County* mentions a Society of Druids, but gives no particulars whatever.

Mr. H. Spencer Clarke, an old resident of Newburgh, to whom I wrote for information on the subject says with reference to the story, “ that any such direful effects ever followed is flatly contradicted by several old residents whom I have

questioned, and in whose veracity I have the fullest confidence." Another correspondent at Newburgh, also an old resident, and who was personally acquainted with its oldest inhabitants, writes : " Rev. Dr. Johnston's account has always been criticised, particularly the mock ceremony."

In Rev. Dr. Wm. B. Sprague's *Annals of the American Pulpit*, is a sketch of Dr. Johnston's life (pp. 396-401), in which no allusion is made to these remarkable circumstances. The sketch is concluded with a letter (giving recollections of Dr. Johnston) by Rev. John Forsyth, D. D., in which the " Society of Ancient Druids " is mentioned ; but not a word with regard to the untimely end of the thirty-six members of the Society, nor indeed of any of them.

I have also consulted the *Autobiography of Rev. John Johnston, D. D.*, with an Appendix, by Rev. James Carnahan, D. D. (1856) ; but neither furnishes any particulars additional to what I have already referred to, nor any authority whatever for what statements are made.

Ruttenber's *History of the Town of Newburgh*, gives an account of what Rev. Dr. Johnston is quoted as saying, with reference to the Druid Society, but does not, by any manner of means, present it as " history." On the contrary, in answer to a letter I wrote to him on this matter, he says : " My examination of the subject, from written and printed evidence and conversation with living, impartial actors in the occurrences, led me to assert that the stories told by Dr. Johnston *et al.*, was *gossip*, almost pure and simple. I traced the deaths of several of the most pronounced cases, and found that unnatural deaths came to none of them, while others lived to be old men. The stories you speak of have been repeated in religious circles so long, however, that many will believe them, no matter what the denials, and hold up holy hands in horror against any denial of a tradition that has religious sanction. It is no consequence to me what men may say, or who says it, nor what the motives. I know the stories are mostly false and wretchedly perverted from the truth."

Let us analyze Mr. Smyth's story, for the purpose of detecting what truth, if any, there is in it :

Dr. Arvine, from whom (through Dr. Burr) it is admitted that Mr. Smyth got it, gives a period of time five times longer than does Mr. Smyth. Dr. Johnston (from whom, undoubtedly, Dr. Arvine got it) reports but one unnatural death (if, indeed, a person "convulsed with spasms" can be considered to have died an "unnatural" death), instead of thirty-six (as reported by Dr. Arvine), so that, if we multiply five by thirty-six, we have one hundred and eighty showing that there was not more than a one hundred and eightieth part of truth in the story (a homœopathic dilution).

A newspaper, published at Newburgh in the early part of this century, called the *Recorder of the Times*, contains a notice of the organization of the "Society of Druids," on Sept. 22d, 1803. Dr. Johnston says that the one person convulsed with spasms, died July 2d, 1799, *four years before the Society was organized*. Besides which is the significant fact that Dr. Johnston does not appear to have been at Newburgh, or, at all events, it is certain that he did not begin to preach there till 1806—*seven years* subsequent to the time *he, himself, states* as that when the person was "convulsed with spasms."

Such is the "truth of history!" as presented from the pulpit. The whole story is unquestionably and simply for effect, viz: that of gaining adherents to the gospel of miracle, superstition and fear. As further proof of this, I have a letter from a member of the church at Newburgh, where Rev. Mr. Smyth preached the sermon alluded to, which says: "Mr. Smyth has received letters from all points of the compass, and seemed rather pleased that the story had been given a fresh start, and hoped much good results from it. We have a special impression in the church, and a number are joining on profession of faith,—thirty-five, I think, from the Sunday-school in one day, alone. I think Mr. Smyth's *little* story is some of the cause."

There are any quantity of just such stories—fables, falsehoods—in *Arvine's Cyclopedia of Anecdote*; and any one who would enjoy Gulliver or Munchausen, would fairly revel in Arvine. *Æsop's Fables* are "sublime truth" in comparison.

## WOMAN IN CHRISTIAN AND HEATHEN COUNTRIES.

IN turning over the leaves of Colonel Ingersoll's *Prose Poems* on my library table, I found, opposite to his article on *Woman*, a paper on which was written, "In what lands are women looked up to, and considered men's equals—Heathen or Christian?" The handwriting was that of a young lady, who had recently been on a visit at my house, and my answer to her question was as follows :

First, let me say of the author of the *Prose Poems*, that it is, in my judgment, no extravagance to say that no man ever lived who had a higher appreciation of the character of woman, or who has uttered more generous sentiments, more eulogistic words, or more beautiful thoughts, or who has interested himself more, or done more in defense of every right of woman, than has this big-brained, big-hearted and justice-loving man, whom the Christian church has traduced, slandered, maligned, and against whom she has fulminated the most terrible of her anathemas, because he dared to think differently from what the Church taught, and because he dared to give expression to his honest thoughts.

To ascertain the cause, or the reason, of the treatment of women in Christian lands, we go back to the inspiring cause, the authority therefor, viz : the Christian text-book called the Holy Bible. Now, what does that teach? At the outset, I am embarrassed by the fact that, in the allusions in this book to the subject of your inquiry (regarding woman), my own sense of delicacy and fear to bring the blush of shame to your cheeks, prevents me from directing your attention to particular

passages in the Bible ; but I can say in general terms, it teaches that the husband shall be the ruler, and the wife the subject (Gen. iii : 16) ; that a father may sell his daughter ; that he may sacrifice her to a mob ; that he may murder her ; that maternity is a crime ; that divorce is the privilege of the husband only ; that polygamy and the slavery of women is justifiable ; that a man not only, may, but *shall*, “surely kill” his wife or daughter, if either endeavor to persuade him to “serve other gods ;” and many other outrages in addition, which a respect for your sense of modesty forbids my even alluding to.

Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton says : “In binding up the Jewish records with the New Testament, under the title of ‘Holy Scriptures,’ Christianity indorses the Jewish idea of womanhood.”

On the subject of polygamy, Luther said : “I confess for my part, that, if a man wishes to marry two or more wives, I cannot forbid him ; nor is his conduct repugnant to Holy Scripture.” And Mrs. Stanton says : “Many Protestant divines wrote in favor of polygamy.”

And what do we find in the New Testament ? Does it teach that women should be looked up to, and considered men’s equals ? Far from it. “In that book also,” says Helen H. Gardener, “the words sister, mother, daughter, wife, are only names for degradation and dishonor.” (I may here acknowledge my indebtedness to that gifted woman—Helen H. Gardener—and to that remarkable work of hers, *Men, Women, and Gods*, for much of the information I am able to furnish on the subject of this communication.)

A few specimens only are necessary to show that the subjection of woman, and her inferiority to man, is inculcated in the New,—as well as the Old,—Testament :

“Wives submit yourselves to your husbands.” “Man is the glory of God—but woman is the glory of man.” “As the Church is subject unto Christ, so let wives be to their husbands, in everything.”

“They (women) are commanded to be under obedience.”

“Let woman learn in silence, with all subjection.” “Ye wives be in subjection to your husbands.” “If they (women) will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home.”

Is it any wonder that women have been treated in the disgraceful manner that they have been in Christian countries, when authority is found for it in the book which is the Christian's idea of all that is right?

In contrast with Paul's instruction to women to ask their husbands if they want to know anything, Dr. Livingstone says that, “among the intelligent tribes of the Upper Gambia, respect for women is universally accorded. Many tribes are governed by a female chief. If you demand anything of a man, the demand is acceded to or rejected, in accordance with the decision of the wife, who is always consulted.” So that there, if a man wants to learn anything, he asks his wife.

In Miss Amelia B. Edwards' lecture in this city, March 22, 1890, on the *Women of Ancient Egypt* (many centuries before the Christian era), she says that “from the earliest time of which we can catch a glimpse, the women of Egypt enjoyed a freedom and independence of which modern nations are only beginning to dream.”

Mrs. Stanton says: “Through theological superstitions woman finds her most grievous bondage. The greatest barrier in the way of her elevation, is the perversion of the religious element of her nature. ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ has ever been a talisman by which tyrants have held the masses in subjection; and woman, in her unbounded faith, has ever been the surest victim. All scriptural lessons teaching the slavery of woman, are echoed and re-echoed in every pulpit.”

Principal J. Donaldson, LL. D., of the great Scotch University of St. Andrews, in a recent number of the *Contemporary Review*, says: “It is a prevalent opinion that woman owes her present high position to Christianity. I used to believe in this opinion. But in the first three centuries I have not been able to see that Christianity had any favorable effect on the position of women, but, on the contrary, that it tended to lower their character, and contract the range of their activity.”

The "fathers" of the Christian Church, drawing their inspiration, doubtless, from the writings of the Old and New Testaments, have given their opinion of woman, which, I submit, is not quite as flattering to her as the opinion of some who do not believe in the fathers.

Mrs. Mary A. Livermore says : "The early Church fathers denounced women as noxious animals, necessary evils and domestic perils."

Lecky says : "Fierce invectives against the sex form a conspicuous and grotesque portion of the writings of the fathers."

Mrs. Stanton says that holy books and the priesthood teach that "woman is the author of sin, who (in collusion with the devil) effected the fall of man."

"Gamble says that "in the fourth century holy men gravely argued the question, 'ought women to be called human beings?'"

But let the Christian fathers speak for themselves. Tertulian, in the following flattering manner, addresses woman : "You are the devil's gateway ; the unsealer of the forbidden tree ; the first deserter from the divine law. You are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed God's image—man."

Clement, of Alexandria, says : "It brings shame, to reflect of what nature woman is."

Gregory Thaumaturgus says : "One man among a thousand may be pure ; a woman, never."

"Woman is the organ of the devil."—St. Bernard.

"Her voice is the hissing of the serpent."—St. Anthony.

"Woman is the instrument which the devil uses to get possession of our souls."—St. Cyprian.

"Woman is a scorpion."—St. Bonaventura.

"The gate of the devil, the road of iniquity."—St. Jerome.

"Woman is a daughter of falsehood, a sentinel of hell : the enemy of peace."—St. John Damascene.

"Of all wild beasts, the most dangerous is woman."—St. John Chrysostom.

“ Woman has the poison of an asp, the malice of a dragon.”  
—St. Gregory-the-Great !

Is it suprising, with such instructions from the fathers, that the children of the Christian Church should *not* “ look up to women, and consider them men's equals ? ”

The following lines of Milton reflect the estimate of woman, which the teachings of Christianity had inculcated :

“ Oh, why did God,  
Creator wise, that peopled highest heaven  
With spirits masculine create at last  
This novelty on earth, this fair defect  
Of nature, and not fill the world at once  
With man, as angels, without feminine ? ”

It is not possible to find in “ heathen lands ” more revolting expressions than those indicating the estimate of woman, as held by the Christian Church, and so it is not surprising that ample proof can be adduced of the superior regard in which woman was held, by what Christian people call Heathen, or Pagan people.

Lecky, in his *European Morals*, says : “ In the whole feudal (Christian) legislation, women were placed in a much lower legal position than in the Pagan empire. That generous public opinion, which in Pagan Rome had revolted against the injustice done to girls, totally disappeared.”

Sir Henry Maine says : “ No society, which preserves any tincture of Christian institutions, is ever likely to restore to married women the personal liberty conferred on them by the Roman law.”

The cause of “ Woman's Rights ” was championed in Greece five centuries before Christ.

Principal Donaldson says : “ The entire exclusion of women (by Christianity) from every sacred function, stands in striking contrast with both heathen and heretical practice.” Again, speaking of the respect shown to women in ancient Rome, he says : “ The same respect was accorded to women by many of the heretical Christians.”

W. Matthieu Williams, F. R. A. S., F. C. S., in his narrative, *Through Norway with Ladies*, asks the question : “ Is



it because their religion is superior to ours, that the Lapp women are better treated, and that their comparative status is higher?"

Helen H. Gardener says: "When the Pagan law recognized her (the wife) as the equal of her husband, the Church discarded that law."

Lecky says: "In the legends of early Rome we have ample evidence, both of the high moral estimate of women, and of their prominence in Roman life. The tragedies of Lucretia and of Virginia display a delicacy of honor and a sense of the supreme excellence of unsullied purity which no Christian nation can surpass."

Sir Henry Maine, in his *Ancient Law*, says that "the inequality and oppression which related to women disappeared from Pagan laws," and adds, "The consequence was that the situation of the Roman female became one of great personal and proprietary independence; but Christianity tended somewhat, from the very first, to narrow this remarkable liberty." He further says that "the jurisconsults of the day contended for better laws for wives, but the Church prevailed in most instances, and established the most oppressive ones."

There is no more patent fact in history than that Christianity has exerted its influence in favor of inequality and injustice, with reference to woman.

Professor Draper, in his *Intellectual Development of Europe*, gives certain facts as to the outrageous treatment of women by Christian men (the clergy included) which it would be exceedingly indelicate in me to repeat.

Moncure D. Conway says: "There is not a more cruel chapter in history, than that which records the arrest, by Christianity, of the natural growth of European civilization regarding women."

Neander, the Church historian, says: "Christianity diminishes the influence of woman."

Mrs. Matilda Joslyn Gage says: "It was not until the tenth century that a Christian wife of a Christian husband acquired the right of eating at the table with him. For many

hundred years the law bound over to servile labor all unmarried women between the ages of eleven and forty."

Lord Brougham says of the common law of England (in its application to women) that "it is a disgrace to any heathen nation."

Mrs. Livermore says: "The mediæval Church declared women unfit for instruction, and down to the Reformation the law proclaimed the wife her husband's creature and slave."

Herbert Spencer says: "Wives in England were bought from the fifth to the eleventh century, and as late as the seventeenth century, husbands of decent station were not ashamed to beat their wives. Gentlemen (!) arranged parties of pleasure for the purpose of seeing wretched women whipped at Bridewell. It was not till 1817, that the public whipping of women was abolished in England."

Where, I ask, do these Christian people get their warrant for their atrocious treatment of women, but from the Bible and from those in authority in the Church?

The late Rev. N. A. Staples, in writing to the Rev. Robert Collyer, said: "That is a real good point you make about woman's treatment in the Bible. I tell you it is a shameful book, in some of its chapters on that subject, and the time will come when it will be so regarded."

Martin Luther, Sir Matthew Hale, Richard Baxter, Cotton Mather, John Wesley, all contributed to the heartless, fiendish persecution of women as witches (not of men as wizards) because the "Word of God" said, "Thou shalt not permit a witch to live."

Buckle says: "The severe theology of Paganism despised the wretched superstition (the belief in witchcraft.)"

Rev. Thomas C. Williams says: "I need not remind you of the moral enormities which have been defended by the supposed authority of the Bible; the burning of witches, the subjection of women," etc.

Not long ago, a firm believer in the complete subjection of women, Rev. Knox Little, said; "No crime which a husband can commit, can justify the wife's lack of obedience."

I suppose there is no nation in heathendom where there are so many wife-beaters, to-day, as in Christian England.

Not many years ago the daughter of a Christian minister to India, who had lived in India from her birth, was on a visit in New York, and meeting with a lady who had married an Englishman, inquired: "Does your husband beat you?" and on the lady replying, "No, why do you ask?" answered, "In India *all* Englishmen beat their wives."

In answering the question, "In what lands are women looked up to, and considered men's equals—Heathen or Christian?" I have simply given what facts I have collected relative thereto, and my authorities for those facts, and if they are found to differ from what has been supposed to exist, it is only the "truth of history" that has made them so to differ.

## INSPIRATION.

WHAT is the foundation of the Christian religion? It is not, *primarily*, a belief in Christ, in God, in immortality. There is a deeper stratum than either of these upon which rests the towering structure of Christianity, and that is the belief in the inspiration, or infallibility, of the Bible; for the Christian's Christ; the Christian's God; the Christian's hope of heaven; the Christian's belief in devils and angels; in a literal hell and in all else that the Bible teaches, are predicated on the assumption that it (the Bible) is inspired by a supreme and infinite intelligence, which Christian conception has formulated as a personal God.

The question naturally arises how does, or can, anyone know anything about inspiration? What is inspiration? What is its process? Rev. J. M. Capes (of the Church of England), says: "How can any person know that he was inspired? Such knowledge would be impossible. What trait could any man possess by which he could distinguish between a fancy that arose out of his own head or supernatural information?"

No one living has had any experience of being inspired and there is no reliable evidence that anyone ever lived who was inspired, in the sense in which the word is usually understood, viz.: that of a supernatural stimulus of the mental faculties. A truer view is to regard inspiration as the natural result of superior intelligence. Anyone is inspired who inspires. Inspiration is the possession of greatness, of genius. Rev. Dr.

Rylance, in the *North American Review* for September, 1884, says: "Moses, David, Isaiah, Paul, inspired! Socrates, Sakya Muni, Marcus Aurelius, Shakespeare, *uninspired!* a *narrow view* of the divine spirit's operation in the world of moral intelligence and feeling. . . . Words from *heathen* authors have become part of what we hold to be supremely inspired Scripture and *are themselves, therefore, inspired.*"

Rev. Heber Newton says: "There is inspiration, too, in other sacred books: other bibles, than ours."

Rev. J. T. Sutherland, in the *Christian Register* of July 21st, 1887, says: "We believe that inspiration is not something which can be locked up in writing or confined to any age or people; but that now, to-day, and here with us, just as truly as in Palestine two or three thousand years ago; the infinite spirit of Wisdom, Truth, Beauty and Love waits to come with its inspiration into every receptive mind."

Every religion has its sacred or inspired book, but it is not recognized as such by the believers in any of the other religions. The Tripitaka is an inspired book to the faith of the Buddhist. The Zend-Avesta to that of the Parsee. The Book of Mormon to the Mormons.

Edward Clodd, in his *Childhood of Religion*, says: "What Christians believe concerning the Bible is believed, in a still more intense degree, by the Bramins concerning the Vedas, by the Muslims concerning the Koran, and so on." But each sneers at the claim of inspiration for the books of the others. Orthodox Christianity claims inspiration for the Bible alone and yet, as Rev. James Freeman Clarke says: "The Bible does not differ from other sacred books in its method of production." John Fiske says: "The Hindoo sacred writings contain all the myths and fables found in the Christian Bible."

Among Christians themselves there exists a wide difference of opinion on the question of inspiration of the Bible. And who is to decide as to who holds the correct view? There are believers in plenary inspiration; that every word of the Bible is literally true, as does Mr. Moody, who says: "If every word between the covers of the Bible is not absolutely true,

then we had better burn it and build a monument heaven high to Voltaire and Paine."

*Per contra:* Rev. Dr. Behrend, in the *Forum* for June, 1890, says: "Current orthodoxy does not teach verbal inspiration." Rev. Dr. W. S. Rainsford says: "Rather than believe in the *literal* truth of the Bible you might better throw it out of the window." (Rev. Theo. Parker *did* throw the Bible on the *floor*, saying, "If it defends human slavery I cast it from me.")

There are all shades of opinion among Christians on the subject of Inspiration.

Some, while repudiating verbal inspiration, profess to believe that in some inexplicable and indefinable way (what they choose to call) the "word of God" is inspired.

There are those who believe that the Bible should contain other books, equally inspired, with those now recognized.

Rev. Geo. P. Fisher, D. D., says: "It must be remembered that they themselves (the books of the Bible) allude to lost books, which were evidently regarded as of equal authority with those in the canon."

The three great branches of the Christian Church have each their own "inspired" book, unrecognized (as a whole) by either of the others.

The Romish Church admits—and the Protestant Church rejects—the books of the Apocrypha.

Great bitterness of feeling grows out of these respective claims for inspiration; as may be illustrated by quoting from two religious journals—Roman Catholic and Protestant. The former speaks of the English authorized Protestant translation as "incorrect and dishonest," and adds "to call that book the Bible is utterly absurd and false."

The Protestant (the *Churchman*) retorts by speaking of the "queer story of the Vulgate and its printers' errors, sanctioned by Papal Bull. . . . The barbarous lingo of Douay Jesuits . . . The Douay version is uncouth . . . It is no secret that at the Council of Trent there were no divines of

sufficient critical skill and historical knowledge to decide the question of the canonicity of the sacred books on its merits.”

Among Protestants themselves wide differences of opinion have existed as to which were canonical books. Luther rejected the claim of inspiration for many of the Old Testament books and for the books of Hebrews, Revelations, Jude and James (the latter he tore from his Bible.) In addition to these four books, the Second Epistle of Peter and the Second and Third Epistles of John were deemed uncanonical by many Christians.

Michaelis hesitates about admitting the inspiration of Mark, Luke and the Acts.

Many other theologians have expressed more or less doubt on the subject of inspiration of the Bible, as a whole. Among these may be named Erasmus, Grotius, Archbishops Tillotson and Whately, Bishops Warburton, Marsh and Horsley, H. Arnold, Messrs. Maurice and Robertson, Charles Kingsley, Dean Stanley and Adam Clarke.

Paley, in his *Evidences*, says: “To make Christianity answerable with its life; for the . . . genuineness of *every* book; the information, fidelity and judgment of *every* writer; is to bring . . . unnecessary difficulties into the whole system.”

President Potter, of Hobart College, in a recent sermon preached in the Church of the Incarnation, in this city, said: “Our Church lays down no definite standard as to inspiration; it leaves that largely a matter of individual thought.”

Inspiration is claimed for the original Hebrew and Greek writers; but, says Prof. Briggs, of the Union Theological Seminary: “It is sheer assumption to claim that the original documents were inerrant.”

Even admitting that the words of the Bible, as originally given and in the original language, were inerrant and inspired, we are met with an important difficulty in reference to the *translations*. The Bible has been translated and re-translated many times; each time with important changes.

The Protestant, King James, version took the place of imperfect previous translations; but this, in turn, is regarded as

imperfect and is now supplanted by the "New Version ;" but which, Rev. Treadwell Walden (in *Popular Science Monthly* for June, 1890), says, "is not a finality, but only tentative to to that which shall meet the brave demand of the nineteenth century."

Rev. Dr. Parkhurst (Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church) says that, "so far as the inspiration of the Bible goes, it lacks that certitude which is claimed for it by those who insist that no errors, in translation or otherwise, have crept into it."

Froude says: "The authority of the translation was the first to be shaken ; then variation in the manuscript, destroying confidence in the original texts. If the original language was miraculously communicated, there was a natural presumption that it would be miraculously preserved. As it has not been, the inference of doubt extends backward on the inspiration."

Dr. Schaff (companion to New Version) says: "Inspiration was not provided for transcribers, any more than for printers ; not for translators, any more than for commentators or readers."

There are more decided and bolder expressions of opinion to-day than ever before on this subject of inspiration.

The Rev. Dr. Wm. Barry, in the *Catholic World*, says: "Methods of arguing in which the inspiration of Scripture . . . is taken for granted are simply futile in the eyes of a generation that has broken with Church traditions of every kind, Catholic or not."

Rev. D. Wm. H. Ward, of the *Independent* says: "The day of belief in the infallibility of the Bible is past."

Rev. George W. Buckley (author of *Politics and Morals*) says: "This dogma of the one infallible book is now fast losing hold of thinking minds, even in the more conservative churches."

In the *Encyclopedia Britannica* is an article on the Bible, written by a theological professor (Robertson Smith, of Aberdeen), of the Free Church (the most conservative branch of the Scotch Church), which article is a most radical destruction of the popular conception of the Bible.



Rev. Henry Frank, D. D., of the Independent Congregational Church of Jamestown, N. Y., says : " The statement that the Bible is an infallible book of divine revelation to humanity, an unqualified and absolute guide to faith and practice, and the only book in all the world containing a so-called revelation, is unhistorical, uncritical and unqualifiedly false."

Can inspiration be properly claimed for a book which contains such contradictions, inaccuracies and inconsistencies as are found in the Bible ?

Dean Stanley says that the very first two chapters of the Bible contradict each other.

Rev. James Freeman Clarke says : " What is the argument for the verbal infallibility of the Bible? . . . Not that there are no contradictions or errors of language, for these are numerous."

Victor E. Lennstrand (the Swedish martyr to honest thought) says : " With regard to the infallibility of the Bible. a minister of the Swedish State Church has informed me that in this book there have been found no less than 9,000 mistakes in science and double as many in history and chronology. In 1873, Rev. Pumarius Fehr stated in the magazine *Loesning for Falket* that the interpolations and forgeries are no fewer than 30,000."

Rev. John W. Chadwick says : " The inconsistencies, contradictions, errors and blots irretrievably demolish the supernatural idea of the Bible."

Dr. Schaff says of the " inconsistencies " of the Bible, that they are

"Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks in Vallambrosa."

Inspiration is claimed for Moses, who was supposed to have written the Pentateuch ; but Biblical critics are almost unanimous in the opinion that Moses did not write those books.

Inspiration is likewise claimed for Matthew, Mark, Luke and John ; yet most critics assure us that, most probably, no persons of those names wrote those books.

Inspiration is claimed for Paul, as the author of Hebrews, and yet Origen says that Paul never wrote that epistle.

The *Truth-Seeker Annual* for 1888 says: "Such Christian writers as Davidson, Westcott, Oort, Hooykas, Kuen, Evan-son, Bauer and Kitto question the ascribed authorship of many of the books of the New Testament." Also, "That as to the authenticity of Mark, the only testimony is that Eusebius said that Papias said that John (the Presbyter) said that Mark wrote down what Peter said that Jesus said."

Bishop Fanstus declared that "it is certain the New Testament was written a long time after Christ, by unknown persons."

As to the time when inspiration was claimed for the Bible, Rev. J. T. Sutherland says: "The books of the Old Testament did not come to be regarded as really sacred much before the time of Christ, and for two centuries none of the New Testament writings were looked upon as equally authoritative with the Old."

Westcott says: "When Paul spoke of the 'Holy Scripture' he meant exclusively the Old Testament."

Dr. Davidson places the writings of Matthew at about the year 119; Luke, Mark and Titus 120; John's Epistles 130; Timothy 140; John's Gospel 150; Peter 170, and adds: "The first instance of the canonization of any of the books of the New Testament was about the year 170."

Rev. James Freeman Clarke says: "It took the Church three centuries to make up its mind what books ought to belong to the New Testament."

In Westbrook's *The Bible, Whence and What?* it is stated "The Councils that accepted the four gospels and seventeen epistles as canonical, rejected more than one hundred and fifty other gospels and epistles that claimed recognition."

Mark Hopkins, in his *Evidences of Christianity*, says that the New Testament, "which we now receive, was not, in all parts, formally agreed upon till between three and four hundred years after the birth of Christ."

Dr. Gardner says that "even as late as the sixth century,

the New Testament canon was not settled by any authority that was considered decisive."

Mosheim says : " As to when or by whom the books of the New Testament were collected into one volume, there are various conjectures of the learned."

Max Müller says " 'Where, when and by whom was the Bible written?' are questions which have never been satisfactorily answered."

Rev. J. T. Sutherland says the Bible " was written many centuries apart, under widely different conditions of civilization, by writers widely differing in belief and style."

Various councils of the Church, often reversing the decisions of previous councils on the question as to which were canonical writings, were held ; until, in 1546, the Council of Trent settled the question for the Romish Church.

Dr. Schaff says : " What was known as the authorized version, or King James Bible, originated in the Hampton Court Conference, in 1604, Dr. Reynolds arguing that there might be a new translation of the Bible, such as now are extant being corrupt. This (King James) Bible was completed in 1611, and was bitterly opposed by Romanists, Hebraists, Armenians, Socinians, Arians, and others."

In 1647, the Westminster Assembly met and decided for the Protestant Church which were " sacred " writings.

The early Christians' idea of inspiration was a vague one, and only such as the authority of the Church permitted.

The Romish Church, as Prof. Mivart says, still " claims to have existed before a line of the New Testament was written, to have authority to determine what was or what was not canonically inspired."

With the right of private judgment, claimed by Luther, came the comparatively new doctrine of the inspiration or infallibility of the Bible itself, or its superiority and authority over any church.

Rev. J. T. Sutherland says : " The doctrine of the infallibility of the Bible was unknown till the sixteenth century."

Henry H. Haworth in the *London Spectator* says : " Before

the Reformation the Church was the depository and interpreter of truth. After the Reformation it was the Bible and not the Church which occupied this position. With the new criterion of truth a new theory of inspiration was introduced."

Rev. James Freeman Clarke says: "The real reason which has influenced the Church to invent and maintain the doctrine of infallible inspiration is a supposed necessity. Unless the Church is infallible, say the Catholics, how can *we* teach with authority? Unless the Bible is infallible, say the Protestants, how can *it* teach with authority?"

The Romish Church determines the question of inspiration (and all other questions) by her Ecumenical Councils. How have these councils been conducted?

Milman says: "The Councils of the Christian Church have been marked by intrigue, injustice and violence."

Rev. W. H. H. Murray says: "Within the Church were held great Councils, packed with partisans, as are our political caucuses with us; and dogmas and doctrines, under which Christianity groans to-day, imposed upon the Church by the scantiest majorities, through fraud and threat."

Eutychius, in his account of the Nicene Council, relates that "the emperor (Constantine) selected 318 of the 2,048 bishops summoned to the Council, and as these 318 were orthodox in their belief, the orthodox religion came thus to be established."

It is by such means as these that the doctrine of inspiration of the "holy mother church" is established and accepted by Roman Catholics.

How can the Protestant Church establish its claim to any inspiration of the Bible itself when it is known that there are no autographs of the Bible writings extant; that there have been numberless alterations, omissions and interpolations, from time to time; that there are thousands of contradictions, errors, untruths in it, to say nothing of its vulgar, immoral recitals; that it has come down to the Protestant Church from the "Fathers," who, as Scalliger says, "put into their Scriptures whatever they thought would suit their purpose."

S. J. Finney says : “ All the evidence we have of the credibility of the Bible is drawn from the Catholic Church ”

Rev. W. H. H. Murray says : “ The dogma of the Papal Church are no more divergent from the simple truth—as Jesus proclaimed it—than are many doctrines held in the past by those who protested against the errors of Rome.”

Neander says : “ Pious frauds overflowed the Church like a flood from the first to the thirteenth century.”

Mosheim says : “ The doctrine that it was commendable to deceive and lie for the sake of truth and piety spread among the Christians of the second century ” (when most of the books of the New Testament were, doubtless, written.)

Dr. Hedge, speaking of the time when the books of the New Testament were received, says : “ It was an age when literary honesty was a virtue almost unknown ; when literary forgeries were commended ; when transcribers did not scruple to alter texts in the interest of personal views or doctrinal prepossessions.”

Dr. Temple, Bishop of Exeter, says : “ The Bible is handed down from age to age and moulded by each in turn.”

Greg, in his *Creed of Christendom*, says : “ The doctrine (of inspiration of the Bible) arose not because it was probable, but because it was wanted.”

Prof. Swing says : “ The Bible has not made religion, but religion has made the Bible.”

Rev. W. H. H. Murray, speaking of certain passages in the Bible, says, “ there is no doubt that they are gross fabrications, foisted bodily into the Bible.”

The *Companion to the Revised New Testament* (approved by the Revising Committee) says : “ We see on what slender authority it (the Bible) rests.”

And yet for such writings the Protestant Church claims infallibility ! As Rev. John W. Chadwick says : “ The record of a supernatural system should be, like Cæsar’s wife, above suspicion.”

Rev. James Freeman Clarke says : “ *No Church* is infallible ; *no creed* is infallible ; *no book* is infallible.”

The dogma of the infallibility of a man is no more absurd than that of the infallibility of a book.

Rev. W. H. H. Murray, speaking of those "ancient legends which became hardened into modern dogma," says: "They are now being relegated to the limbo, unto which are flung the cast-off garments of vagabond theories."

"When I was a child, I spake as a child; I understood as a child; I thought as a child. But when I became a man, I put away childish things."

We, of mature age, have passed through the impressible and credulous days of childhood and have become educated, thoughtful, reasoning men and women; so religion has had its stage of infancy, its "childhood hour," its undeveloped, unlettered and irrational centuries of "belief by faith;" but, thanks to this cultured, investigating and scientific age, we are fast outgrowing childish thoughts and childish beliefs, and are now rapidly learning, as Rev. Heber Newton recently instructed his congregation, to "submit every article of faith to the test of reason."

The mythical Santa Claus, which is so real and literal to our little ones, is left in the nursery as the period of maturity approaches, and so the puerile myths and fables of the Garden of Eden (as to which Henry Ward Beecher said "there never was such a gigantic lie told"); of the flood; of Jonah (which Luther characterized as "monstrous"); of the standing still of the sun; of the turning of water into wine; of the feeding of the five thousand; of bringing the dead to life, and of the resurrection (which, as Rev. W. H. H. Murray says, is a dogma "old as the world"), should all be relegated to the nursery of past and ignorant ages.

Rev. Dr. Leonard W. Bacon says: "*All* history is 'sacred' history." It may with equal truth be said that *all* genius is "inspired."

No intelligent, fair-minded person can "search the Scriptures" without being satisfied that they are as human productions as are the writings of Homer, Herodotus, Josephus, Dante, Shakespeare, Hume or Bancroft.

Col. Ingersoll (than whom there is no person—be he priest or minister—who is better informed as to the history and contents of the Bible) says: “All that is necessary, as it seems to me, to convince any reasonable person that the Bible is simply and purely human invention—of *barbarous* invention—is to read it. Read it as you would any other book; think of it as you would any other; get the bandage of reverence from your eyes; drive from your heart the phantom of fear; push from the throne of your brain the cowed form of superstition; then read the ‘Holy Bible,’ and you will be amazed that you ever for one moment supposed a being of infinite goodness and purity to be the author of such ignorance and such atrocity.”

I have not sought so much (as may be noticed) to present my own opinions on this matter of inspiration; not even to merely urge the views of those of acknowledged reliability (most of whom are *Christian* writers of eminence, whose authority cannot easily be gainsaid by other Christians), but rather to place the subject before your readers as an *historical* one; proving, I think, most conclusively thereby, the falsity and absurdity of any claim of inspiration for the Bible.

It seems incredible that cultured, reasoning people can believe in the “inspiration” of such a book; and inconceivable that on such belief could rest (as does) the entire fabric of orthodox Christianity. It is incomprehensible that truthful, pure-minded persons can respect a book that contains (as it undeniably does) more that is false and obscene than any other book that is permitted in the sanctuary of our homes.

Baxter—and many other Christian writers—considered many parts of the Bible immoral.

Bishop Colenso asks the significant question: “Would it not be well to eliminate from the Bible whatever is *untruthful* and *immoral*?”

Richard B. Westbrook, D. D., LL. B., also asks: “Why should we not have a Bible that all can read without shame, and the truths of which none can reasonably deny?”

Noah Webster says : " Many passages of the Bible are expressed in language which decency forbids to be repeated."

And yet to circulate *such* a book probably not less than twenty millions of dollars, possibly more than double that sum, are annually expended by the Christian Church.

And James Anthony Froude says : " Considering the enormous and astounding follies which the Bible has been made to justify, and which its indiscriminate reading has suggested, and that the devil himself (if there be a devil) could not have invented an implement more potent to fill the world with lies and blood and fury, I think that to send hawkers over the world, loaded with copies of this book, scattering it in all places, among all persons, is the most culpable folly of which it is possible for man to be guilty."



## THE ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

ORTHODOX clergymen of the Christian Church have usually been unwilling to admit certain facts of history, fearing, doubtless, that they might tend to lessen confidence in the Orthodox Church. One of these facts is that Christianity is borrowed from the older religions: that it is, in many respects, almost an exact copy of previously existing religions, or, to say the least, that there is between it and the more ancient religions, a most remarkable similitude, agreement or coincidence.

In view of this truth it is gratifying to read from a recent number of the *New York Observer* of "the organization of a society for the study of 'comparative religion,'" which the writer says is a "field of research which has been much neglected by Christian scholarship" (!) and that, to so orthodox a clergyman as the Secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, Rev. Dr. F. F. Ellinwood, this organization is principally due. The *Observer* states that "Christian apologists" formerly endeavored to show "that the Christian religion was unlike all others, both in its essence and requirements, and therefore, could not be referred to that origin;" but that a change has taken place; that "the battle-ground of to-day is totally different. Christianity does not now, as formerly, deny or ignore these coincidences and resemblances." It asks the question "Do they (these coincidences and resemblances) exist;" and answers, with the admission, "Yes, many and marvelous." And of what do these coincidences and resemblances consist? The *Observer* answers:

“They consist in ideas, truths, cosmogonies, symbols, feasts and festivals,” and adds that “ethnological, philological and archæological research has revealed *astonishing* coincidences between the religion of the Bible and other ancient religions.” These wholesale admissions, coming from so unexpected (so orthodox) a quarter, are most noteworthy; although it is simply an historical fact that all, or nearly all, that pertains to Christianity is found in earlier religions; a fact well attested, as follows:

Rev. R. Heber Newton says: “There is in fact, as we now see, nothing in the externals of the Christian Church which is not a survival from the Churches of Paganism. Tonsured head and silvery bells and swinging censer; Christmas and Easter festivals; Holy Madonna with her child; the sacramental use of bread, of water and of wine. The very sign of the cross; are all ancient human institutions, rites and symbols. . . . Scratch a Christian and you come upon a Pagan. Christianity is re-baptized Paganism.”

Rev. M. J. Savage says: “Every rite and symbol of the Christian Church may be found in the older religions.”

Peter Eckler (in *Gibbon's Christianity*.) says: “There is not a rite, ceremony or belief we now practice or profess that cannot be traced to its origin in Chaldean idolatry, in Assyrian, Egyptian or Roman mythology.”

Judge R. B. Westbrook says: “We find in *all* scriptures, ancient and modern, the same symbols, sacraments and ceremonies.”

Rev. John W. Chadwick says: “The great religions of the world differ in degree only, not in kind. . . . The holy water at the door of a Roman Catholic Church is a survival of the lustral water of the Pagan temple; its censers and tapers and votive offerings, of Pagan censers and tapers and votive offerings; “The worship of the Virgin Mary is a survival of the worship of Vesta. . . . The conversion of the Roman Empire by Christianity was about equally the conversion of Christianity by the Roman Empire. The Empire became Christian; Christianity became Pagan.”

In Charles B. Waite's *History of the Christian Religion*, we read that "many of the more prominent doctrines of the Christian religion, prevailed hundreds and—in some instances—thousands of years before Christ. The doctrine of the immaculate conception, of an infant deity, was not uncommon in very ancient times. The title of 'Son of God' was very common in very ancient times. The belief in miracles has been common in all ages of the world. Resurrection from the dead was claimed for Mithras, Quexalcote, Osiris, Christna and others. The doctrine of the atonement has, in some forms pervaded the religion of all countries. The Trinity was an essential feature in the religion of many oriental countries and is considered, by Worsely, of very great antiquity. The doctrine of the remission of sins prevailed in India, Persia, and China. The doctrines of original sin, fall of man, and endless punishment, are all to be found in the religious systems of several ancient nations. Sprinkling with water was a religious ceremony of much antiquity. The sacrament was practiced among the Brahmins, the ancient Mexicans, and was introduced with the mysteries of Mithras."

Capt. Robert C. Adams (son of the orthodox Rev. Nehemiah Adams, of Boston), says: "All the doctrines that are deemed essential to Christianity are the outgrowth of earlier beliefs. . . . In India—900 B. C.—Christna was born of the Virgin Devaki, and—500 B. C.—Buddha was born of the Virgin Maya. In Egypt, Horus and his virgin mother, Isis, were worshipped long before the time of Christ. . . . The doctrine of the Trinity was held by the Brahmins, who worshipped Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, and by the Buddhists who revered 'the three pure, precious and honorable Fo.' . . . The term *logos*, or word, was applied to Apollo. . . . The Holy Ghost is symbolized by the dove of Venus. . . . The sacrament of bread and wine was observed in honor of Osiris, the risen God of ancient Egypt; and of Mithra, the Persian Saviour. . . . Baptism was a universal custom, Buddhists dipped (three times), and Brahmins sprinkled. . . . Confirmation was also practiced by the ancient Per-

sians. . . . The cross is a world-wide symbol of vast antiquity. . . . I. H. S. was the monogram of Bacchus. . . . Festivals to saints and martyrs replaced Pagan festivals. . . . Christmas was the birthday of the Gods, and was the ancient feast of the sun. . . . Good Friday and Easter were observed in honor of Adonis. . . . The title 'Mediator' was applied to Mithra in Persia. . . . Atonement was made by animals, men and Gods. . . . Regeneration was symbolized by a person passing through clefts in rocks, as though born (again) out of the earth. . . . The end of the world, the day of judgment and future punishment were matters of belief in remote times."

The author of *Bible Myths* says: "Every Christian doctrine, rite and symbol can be shown to have pre-existed in Pagan usage. . . . Pagan festivals became Christian holidays; Pagan temples became Christian churches. . . . The only difference between Christianity and Paganism is that Brahma, Ormazd, Osiris, Zeus, Jupiter, etc., are called by another name: Christna, Buddha, Bacchus, Adonis, Mithras, and others, turned into Jesus; Venus' pigeon into the Holy Ghost; Diana, Isis, Devaki, and forty-five other virgin mothers, into the Virgin Mary; the demi-gods and heroes of ancient times into Christian saints."

Judge Richard B. Westbrook, author of *The Bible, Whence and What*, says: "There is scarcely a story or incident recorded, as an historical fact, in the Old Testament, that is not evidently founded, in whole, or in part, upon some more ancient legends of the East. . . . No fundamental doctrine is taught in either the Old or New Testament that was not as distinctly taught centuries before the Hebrew-Egyptian Moses or the Judean Jesus were ever heard of. . . . There is scarcely a dogma in Christianity which has not its match in the more ancient religion of Hindostan. There is not an attribute of deity, not a moral principle, not a single duty taught in any modern system of theology that has not been as truly held by many of the great leaders of the ancient Pagan religions. . . . The basic principle of the fall of man and

his recovery are not only similar, but almost identical, in all scriptures—Pagan, Jewish and Christian. . . . It would be easy to furnish a list of scores of Saviours, most of whom were subjects of promise and prophecy ; miraculously conceived ; themselves working miracles ; their destruction sought by jealous monarchs ; generally dying for mankind and having a triumphant resurrection.”

Canon Freemantle (*Fortnightly Review*, March, 1887) says : “If we fix our minds upon ideas, once thought to be exclusively Christian, are there not incarnations, miraculous births and resurrections in the Brahminical religion? . . . The knowledge of the religions of the East and West show us points of the closest analogy with that recorded in the Bible, and the question is forced upon us whether there is any line to be drawn between them.”

Rev. J. T. Sutherland says : “Sacrificial ideas and ideas of atonement came from the religions of the heathen world. The rite of baptism, the sacrament, the ideas of immaculate conception and virgin mothers existed long before the time of Christ ; the same rituals, symbols, holy days, miracles and incarnations.”

Prof. Huxley (in *Popular Science Monthly* for August, 1889) says : “There is strong ground for believing that the doctrines of the resurrection ; of the last judgment ; of heaven or hell ; of the hierarchy of good angels ; of Satan and evil spirits, were derived from Persian and Babylonian sources and are essentially of heathen origin.”

T. W. Higginson, in his *Sympathy of Religions*, says : “In these various religions are constantly met the same doctrines—regeneration, predestination, atonement, future life, final judgment, divine logos, and the Trinity. The same prophecies and miracles—the dead restored and evil spirits cast out—and the same holy-days. . . . Zoroaster, Confucius, Osiris and Buddha, have no human father, and between the lives of the last two and that of Christ an almost perfect parallel is shown.”

Alex. von Humboldt says of the different religions of the

world : " Each fills some blank space in its creed with the name of a different teacher."

But little, comparatively, was known until more recent years of the so-called sacred books of religions other than Christian. To Max Müller are we much indebted for translations which show a remarkable similitude in all religions. In a comparison of the Persian and Jewish religions, Prof. Müller says : " What applies to the religion of Moses, applies to that of Zoroaster." He also shows that in the more ancient religious books are found much of what Christianity has claimed as (exclusively) her own. Writing of the first three centuries after Christ, when Paganism was being absorbed by Christianity, he says : " That age was characterized by a spirit of religious syncretism — an eager thirst for compromise. . . . Maya and Sophia, Mithra and Christ, Virof and Isaiah, were mixed up in one jumbled system of inane speculation."

Mosheim says : " The Christians of the second century adopted certain rites and ceremonies employed in what was known as the ' Heathen mysteries.' "

The *Outlook*, Rev. A. H. Lewis, D. D., editor says : " Pagan theories and practice were diffused throughout the (Christian) Church."

Origen (in early part of the third century) said : " Christianity and Paganism differ in no essential points, but have a common origin, and are really one and the same religion."

Faustus, writing to Augustine (in the fourth century), says : " Nothing distinguishes you from the Pagans except that you hold your assemblies apart from them."

Rev. Aug. Thebaud says : " At the beginning of the sixth century Rome was almost entirely Pagan."

Seymore says : " The principles of Heathen Romanism and those of Christian Romanism are one and the same."

Paganism is the trunk, the tree, the branches, the leaves ; Christianity is but the bloom. " Christianity is the flower of Paganism," says Rev. R. Heber Newton.

The resemblance between the legend of a more remote an-

tiquity, with respect to the Saviours of other religions and those relating to Christ are most striking.

Kersey Graves has written the stories of sixteen crucified Saviours.

Justin Martyr, addressing the Emperor Adrian, says : " As to Jesus Christ having been born of a virgin, you have your Perseus to balance that."

Rev. S. Eitel—quoted approvingly by Rev. Dr. Kellogg (Presbyterian) in *Light of Asia and Light of the World*—says : " With the single exception of Christ's crucifixion, almost every characteristic incident in Christ's life is also to be found narrated in the traditions of the life of Buddha."

In an article by T. Bush in the *Freethinkers' Magazine* for September, 1890, a comparison is drawn between the vicarious sacrifice of Alcestis (as related by Euripides in the fifth century B. C.) and that of Christ, and says : " Mark the striking resemblance of the characteristic features of the two fictions—Pagan and Christian. In both there was a death, burial and resurrection ; in both a descent into hell ; in both a failure on the part of their dearest friends to recognize the victims on their return from hell, and lastly no one was allowed to touch the resuscitated substitutes until a godly purification had been observed."

Rev. Spence Harvey says : " The resemblance between the legend of Maya, the mother of Buddha, and the doctrine of the virginity of the mother of Christ, cannot but be marked."

In Arthur Little's *Buddhism in Christianity* he says : " The annunciation in the cases of Maya and Mary are quite similar . . . Buddha, like Christ, had twelve disciples, and called them with the same words that Christ did, saying, ' Follow me.' . . . Buddha, too, had his fasting, baptism and temptation. . . . Buddha delivered a sermon on a mountain and taught in parables. . . . Peter, walking in the water, has its counterpart in the life of Buddha. . . . Buddha, Zarathusa and Mahomet were heralded by a star."

Prof. Rhys Davids says : " A rich young man came by night to Buddha."

The Abbe Prouveze says: "The points of similarity between (Tibetan) Buddhism and Christianity are far too minute to do away with the idea of plagiarism."

In the *Truth Seeker* for December, 1888, John R. Charlesworth gives the Hindoo legend almost identical with that with reference to Christ. The Virgin Devanaguy was "overshadowed" by the God Vishnu and gave birth, in a stable, to Christna, who the shepherds adored. The reigning tyrant of Modura, seeking to destroy Christna, ordered the massacre of all male infants. This legend dates back 3,500 B. C. A somewhat similar legend exists among the Chinese, with reference to Buddha and his virgin mother Maya-devi.

That the sign of the cross, for centuries before the Christian era, was in common use the wide world over, and that, therefore, it was not exclusively a symbol of Christianity, is well attested.

"The sign of the cross was in use as an emblem long before the Christian era." (*Chamber's Encyclopedia.*)

"We find among ancient nations the cross as one of their most cherished symbols." (Dr. Lundy.)

"The cruciform device occupied a prominent position among the many sacred and mystic symbols and figures connected with the mythologies of heathen antiquity." (*Encyclopedia Britannica.*)

"From the dawn of Paganism in the East to the establishment of Christianity in the West, the cross was undoubtedly one of the commonest and most sacred of symbolical monuments." (Bishop Colenso.)

"It is high time that Christians should understand a fact, of which skeptics have been long talking and writing, that the cross was the central symbol of ancient Paganism." (Rev. A. H. Lewis, D. D.)

The dogma of the Trinity is likewise of Pagan extraction:

"The doctrine of the Trinity is an Eastern speculation; Christianity clothed itself in this ancient garb, . . . betraying to him who knows the fabrics of the East, the looms of Egypt and India." (Rev. R. Heber Newton.)



“The dogma of the Trinity is Platonic and Egyptian.”  
(Rev. Jas. Freeman Clarke.)

“We can trace the history of this doctrine (of the Trinity) and discover its source, not in the Christian revelation, but in the Platonic philosophy.” (Rev. Andrews Norton.)

“Traces of belief in the Trinity are to be found in most heathen nations. It is discernible in Persian, Egyptian, Roman, Japanese and most of the ancient Grecian mythologies and is very marked in Hindooism.” (Rev. Lyman Abbott.)

The Trinities of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva; of Osiris, Isis and Horus; of Odin, Vili and Ve, were believed in centuries before the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost was promulgated.

Similitudes, in other respects, between the more ancient religions and Christianity are, likewise, simple matters of history.

The story of creation, of the temptation of Adam and Eve, of the flood, of the tower of Babel, were told long before a line of the Bible was written (see *Outlook*—July, 1890—by Rev. Dr. Lewis.)

“The Greeks, Romans and Hindoos used the same words as those which commence (what is called) ‘the Lord’s prayer’ and which is found in almost identical language in the Jewish Kadish.” (Judge R. B. Westbrook, of Phila.)

“There exists not a people, whether Greek, barbarian, or any other race, among whom prayers are not offered up in the name of a crucified Saviour.” (A Church Father.)

The origin of the Christian gospels and doctrines are shown to be from Egyptian and other Oriental sources, in *Diegesis* by Rev. Robert Taylor.

What the Christian conceives to be God is similar to the Hindoo conception of Brahma, the Greek conception of Zeus or the Roman conception of Jupiter.

“A local heaven and a local hell are found in every mythology.” (Prof. John W. Draper.)

“The essence of the Christian religion is the center dogma of Buddhism.” (Schopenhauer.)

In every phase of this question we discover that the Christian religion is, indeed, almost an exact copy of earlier religions and mythologies.

Peter Eckler, in his notes on *Gibbon's Christianity*, says : "The similarity between the Pagan and Hebrew belief is apparent. . . . The miracles performed by Jews and Egyptians were precisely the same. . . . The Roman Hercules was called a Saviour of mankind, born of a human mother and an immortal father. The same was also claimed for the Indian Christna, the Egyptian Osiris and the Grecian Apollo."

The marvelous stories connected with the lives and times of Joshua, Balaam and Moses are evident derivations from the myths of more ancient times.

A. L. Rawson, in the *Freethinker's Magazine* for March, 1888, says : "We read in the Iliad, of Juno hastening the sunset and of making a horse speak, and of Jupiter turning a serpent into stone. In the Odyssey, of Minerva retarding the sunrise and as transforming Odysseus. Calisthenes (quoted by Josephus) wrote that in the Pamphylian sea a passage for Alexander the Great's army was opened, the waters rising and doing homage to him as a king."

The late D. M. Bennett said, that "the Christian religion is made up from religious systems which existed many centuries prior to it. In every essential particular it is mere plagiarism ; a reconstruction of the dogmas and superstitions of older heathen nations."

The *Truth Seeker* says that Mr. Bennett traced *forty* events, traditions, ceremonies and dogmas, now regarded as Christian, to pre-existing religions.

Thus it would seem that the Christian religion has become heir to all the myths, mysteries, mythologies, dogmas, doctrines, legends, fables, traditions, superstitions, miracles, rites, ceremonies, sacraments and symbols of the older religions. Even the moral precepts of Christ were the utterances of Buddha, of Confucius and other religious teachers, centuries before the Christian era. As A. C. Bowen, in the *North American Review* for March, 1887, says : "Much of the

ethical greatness and sweetness which we, in our bigotry, thought to belong to Christianity alone, has lived for centuries in the religions of the East."

Renan says: "Nearly everything in Christianity is mere baggage brought from the Pagan mysteries."

Col. Ingersoll says of Christianity, that it "administered on the estate of Paganism and appropriated most of the property to its own use." Again he says: "The grave clothes of Paganism became the swaddling wraps of Christianity."

## WITH OR WITHOUT CHRISTIANITY.

I HAVE been asked the question : " Would the world be better off with or without Christianity." My answer was " without," and was made advisedly ; after bestowing a great deal of thought upon, and many years of study of, the subject.

It is but historical truth that Christianity has discouraged learning, antagonized science and retarded civilization ; that it has instigated fear, incited persecution and encouraged war ; that it has stirred up jealousy, enmity and strife ; that it has been the prop of thrones, the friend of despotism, the enemy of liberty ; that it substitutes faith for reason, legend for fact, tradition for history, fable for truth ; that it would punish honest thought with never ending torture, and reward dishonest belief with eternal bliss ; that it has shown itself to be ignorant, credulous, superstitious, bigoted, arrogant, irrational, unjust, tyrannical, pharisaical, cruel and immoral ; that it falsely assumes to possess the only true system by which uprightness of character and moral conduct are inculcated and attained ; and that it erroneously claims to have established the only institutions of a beneficent character that have existed.

I propose to call as witnesses, in proof of what I say, those whose character, ability and truthfulness cannot be gainsaid.

There is no doubt of the fact that from the fourth century—when Christianity first became a power in the world, under the leadership of one of the most blood-thirsty monarchs who ever ruled in Rome, the great *Christian* Emperor Constantine—down to the fourteenth century, a period of a thousand years, known as the dark and the middle ages ; the light of intelligence became almost extinct.

It is but historical truth that this "light of intelligence" was not revived except under the auspices of a *rival* religion.

Let Lecky be my first witness. He says: "Not till *Mohammedan* science and classical *free thought* and industrial independence broke the sceptre of the (Christian) Church did the intellectual revival of Europe begin. . . . Decadence of theological influence has been one of the most invariable signs and measures of our progress. . . . The Church has uniformly betrayed and trampled on the liberties of the people. She has invariably cast her lot into the scale of tyranny."

Rev. James Freeman Clarke speaks of "that prodigious development of art, science and literature which followed the conquests of the Saracens."

In *Rees. Cyclopaedia* we read: "It was in a great measure owing to the light of learning and science which shone in Arabia that the whole earth was not at this time (about the year 1,000) overwhelmed with intellectual darkness."

Canon Isaac Taylor said recently that "Islamism has done *more* for civilization than Christianity has done or can do."

Buckle says: "In the sixth century the Christians succeeded in cutting off the last ray of knowledge and shutting up the schools of Greece. Then followed a long period of theology, ignorance and vice. . . . To assert that Christianity communicated to man moral truths, previously unknown, argues gross ignorance or willful fraud."

Prof. Draper says: "The history of science is the narrative of two contending powers; the expansive force of the human intellect on the one side and the compression arising from traditionary faith on the other. . . . In 1,200 years when Christianity dominated the civilized world, the Church had not made a single discovery that advanced the cause of humanity or ameliorated the condition of mankind."

Guizot says: "When any step was taken to establish a system of permanent institutions which might effectually protect liberty from the invasions of power in general, the Church always ranged herself on the side of despotism."

Macauley says : "The Church of England continued for 150 years to be the servile handmaid of monarchy ; the steady enemy of public liberty."

M. Richard, M. P., said : "Almost always the voice of the Church has been for war."

Rev. John W. Chadwick says : "War has been the favorite trade of Christians from the time of Jesus until now."

"Priests, pale with vigils, in Christ's name have blessed  
The unsheathed sword."—(*Whittier.*)

"I come not to bring peace, but a sword," is the authority.

John Bright has said that "the bishops of the Church of England have seldom aided legislation in the interest of humanity."

William Lloyd Garrison, Jr., says : "Human progress has always been advanced by the few laborers outside the Church, than by the many professors within it."

Mrs. Besant says : "Christianity set itself against all popular advancement ; all civil and social progress ; all improvement in the condition of the masses. While it reigned supreme, Europe lay in chains ; and even into the new world it carried the fetters of the old."

Prof. Felix L. Oswald says : "The history of Christian dogmatism is the history of over 1,800 years of war against nature and truth."

Robert C. Adams says : "Almost every scientific advance or social reform has been opposed by Christians."

"The author of *Supernatural Religion* says : "It is an undoubted fact that wherever . . . dogmatic theology has been dominant, civilization has declined."

In the sixteenth century the Bishop of London said : "We must in some way destroy this infernal art (printing) or it will some day destroy us !"

John Stewart Mill says : "Who can estimate what the world loses in the bright intellects who cower before popular prejudice."

Condercet says : "The triumph of Christianity was the first signal of the decline of sciences and of philosophy."

Fuerbach says : "The decline of culture was identical with the victory of Christianity."

Lange says : "Education and enlightenment, as a rule, go hand in hand with the decrease of the clergy."

Winwood Reade (nephew of Charles Reade and author of the *Martyrdom of Man*) says : "I am firmly persuaded that whatever is injurious to the intellect is also injurious to moral life ; and on this conviction I base my conduct with respect to Christianity ; that religion is pernicious to the intellect. . . . The destruction of Christianity is essential to the interests of civilization."

The murder of Hypatia is a specimen estimate of how both women and learning were held in the eyes of Christians in the fifth century.

The leaders of the Reformation likewise displayed great animosity to philosophy and science. And even to-day in both Roman Catholic and Protestant churches science is treated as heretical.

Rev. Dr. Rylance (Protestant Episcopal) is frank enough to admit that "the attitude of our Church authorities toward modern science is far from friendly."

Protestants are usually apt to speak as though it is the Romish Church alone which has been and is a hindrance to scientific study. Lyell, in his *Principle of Geology*, says that "the theological war upon the true scientific method in geology was waged more fiercely in Protestant than in Catholic countries."

Hon. Andrew D. White says : "The warfare of religion against science is to be guarded against in Protestant countries not less than in Catholic." He tells us that while it is true that the Copernican theory was not permitted to be taught by the authorities at Rome until the early part of this century, and that while the Church universities of every great Catholic country of Europe concealed the discovery of spots on the sun, and excluded the Newtonian demonstrations, it is also

true that "the two great universities of Protestant England, and nearly all her intermediate colleges, under clerical supervision, have excluded the natural and physical sciences as far as possible. . . . From probably *nine-tenths* of the universities and colleges of the United States, the students are graduated with either no knowledge, or with *clerically emasculated* knowledge, of the most careful modern thought on the most important problems in the various sciences, in history and in criticism."

The Church has successively taught that the earth was flat; that it was the center of our solar system; that it was but a few thousand years old; that the astronomy, geology and biology of to-day were unscriptural and therefore untrue. But scientific truth is forcing its penetrating light into the dark and cheerless abodes of theology and commanding the respect of, at least, some of the clergy.

In the *Popular Science Monthly* for October, 1880, we read: "Archbishop Whateley used to say that the attitude of the clergy to new scientific doctrines was marked by three definite stages. At first they say it is 'ridiculous,' then that it is contradicted by the Bible, lastly, 'we always believed it.'"

The *Truth Seeker* of Sept. 13, 1890, says: "The Church has been the greatest drag upon the world, keeping it back as long as she was able and then when anything has been accomplished in spite of her, she has claimed the credit."

Rev. John W. Chadwick says: "The sun of truth was well up towards its meridian splendor ere theology gathered her courtiers about her, and in her most impressive manner said: 'Now rise.'"

The persecutions and murders for opinion's sake have no parallel in the history of any other than the Christian religion.

Think of just this single fact: that the Calvinistic Church is founded upon the tenets of one who instigated the torture and death of the Martyr Servetus for the crime (!) of transposing two words, viz., that the victim of this barbarism had spoken of Christ as the "son of the living God," instead of "the living son of God." Truly has Archdeacon Farrar



characterized Calvinism as having "exhibited an intolerance which has doomed its dogmas to the abhorrence of mankind."

Did the flames which wrapt the tortured bodies of the victims of Christian cruelty at Rome, at Seville, at Smithfield, at Geneva and at Salem, exemplify the religion of kindness, of compassion and of love?"

A recent writer says: "History shows that religion has been more relentless under the auspices of the Christian theology than under those of all the other theologies of the world combined. . . . It is the only fiend in the universe cruel enough to burn a man to death, by slow fire, for merely holding an opinion."

It is estimated that nine millions of people suffered martyrdom because of the one verse in the Bible, "Thou shalt not permit a witch to live."

The Christians put to death nearly twenty millions of their fellow-beings in the fanatical days of the Crusades, and probably, from that day to this, not less than fifty millions more have been sacrificed in answer to the requirements of another Bible text: "Those mine enemies who will not that I shall rule over them, bring hither and slay before me." (Luke xix., 27.)

How encouraging to the patriots of our revolution, and to those in other lands who have struggled against oppression, to read that "the powers that be are ordained of God; whoever resisteth the power shall receive to themselves damnation."

The Church was almost a unit in sustaining slavery. The return of the fugitive Onesimus by Paul to Philomon was regarded as sufficient authority among Christians for the enactment of the "Fugitive Slave Law."

Is it conducive to the spread of truth that in every Sunday school, Bible class and church it is taught that to Christianity we are indebted for the spread of civilization, learning, science and ethics; when impartial history is most emphatic in proclaiming the falsity of such teachings.

Is the incentive to do right more noble when stimulated by hope of reward and fear of punishment, as taught by Chris-

tianity ; or by the principle of doing right because it is right to do right ?

Mr. Chauncey M. Depew has said : " The religion of my mother is good enough for me. "

Think of so brilliant an intellect positively refusing to entertain a thought on theology beyond that he learned on his mother's knee. Is such a forced condition of mental inertia conducive to intellectual progress ? Had Luther said that the religion of his (Roman Catholic) mother was good enough for him, where would have been the Reformation ? Had Christ contented himself with the religion of his (Jewish) mother, there would have been no Christianity !

How cheering to the home circle, the admonition, " Woe unto you that laugh. "

Various texts from the Bible have ever been the justification of the Christian Church for the inculcation of its lessons of woman's inferiority, for demanding her uncomplaining subjection to man. " He shall rule over thee, " is the lesson to every wife from all Orthodox pulpits.

Think of the severing of family ties in the name of the Christian religion, for voluntary incarceration in nunneries and monasteries ; for some idea of the immoralities practiced in which, see Robertson's *Charles V.*

How encouraging to morality the saying of Luther, that " men can commit adultery and murder a thousand times a day without imperiling their salvation, if they only believe enough on Christ. "

Have the morals of the people been improved by Bible reading ?

Rev. T. C. Williams says : " I need not remind you of the moral enormities which have been defended by the supposed authority of the Bible. "

Rev. John W. Chadwick says : " What shall I say of the morals of the Penteteuch ; of its God who bids men steal and kill ; of Deborah's thrilling song, exulting over falsehood and treachery ; of the gross lasciviousness of the Song of Songs ? "

Rev. J. S. Richardson (a Church of England Bishop,)

alluding to the Old Testament, says : " It is no longer honest to deny that it was somewhat mistaken in its science, inaccurate in its history, and *accommodating* in its morality."

Frederick May Holland says : " Voltaire was much less shocked by the absurdities in the Bible than by the immoralities."

Is it elevating to character to listen to pulpit instructions about the God of the Bible, who is there represented as a being capricious and unstable ; as now hating and again loving ; as now chastening and again indulging ; as now permitting ill and again punishing it ; as foreseeing guilt and acquiescing in it ; as issuing edicts and reversing them ; as giving favors and revoking them, and as being appeased by servility? (See *Volney's Ruins*, p. 84.)

Beecher said : " The God of the Bible is a moral monstrosity."

"The God men make for men—  
A God impossible to common sense."

Is the world made better for belief in the Bible with its incredible stories ; its teachings with regard to polygamy, slavery, intemperance and deception ; its obscene recitals ; its records of wars on unoffending neighbors ; of the destruction of the lives of men, married women and children, and of the capture (for the soldiery) of the maidens?

What shall be thought of a religion which invades the sanctity of home, and says that it has " come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother ;" that demands that " the brother shall betray the brother to death and the father the son ;" that makes imperative the *hating* of father, mother, brother and sister?

How many thousands of emotional beings have become demented in their anxiety about their " soul's salvation," by reason of the fearful pictures of unending torment which the clergy present in such glowing colors?

Rev. John W. Chadwick says : " Ignorance and superstition are the principal ingredients of revivals of religion.

. . . The average revival of religion must reckon hundreds of thousands of shattered intellects."

Day after day we read of the deaths of fanatics who refuse the customary methods of healing the sick because of the Christian injunction, "If any is sick among you let him call for the elders of the church, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick."

What virtuous principle is encouraged by the text: "The Lord has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy servants?"

"Be not wise above that which is written," is the advice which Christianity offered to Copernicus, to Columbus, to Newton, to Fulton, to Morse, and to Darwin.

Is it promotive of civilization, of humanity, of justice, or of truth, that is inculcated when nearly every murderer, under the sanctifying processes administered by their attending priests and ministers, goes direct from the scaffold to "Abraham's bosom," while the *victim* in nearly every instance goes equally direct to the embrace of the eternally damned?

The fanning mill, the census, life insurance, railways, telegraphy, biology, geography, agriculture, medicine, surgery, all have been denounced by the Christian Church as "heralds of anti-Christ," or as "shameful theories." (See *Truth Seeker*, Sept. 13, '90)

The Church has claimed superiority for what they call "Christian Ethics." There is abundant testimony in refutation of such claim. I will content myself by referring the reader to but one and that to thoroughly Orthodox authority, viz.: to Rev. E. H. Burr, D. D., in his *Universal Beliefs*, pp. 243 and 249.

The Christian Church claims that *it alone* has made provision for those whose physical and mental infirmities have rendered them a care on the more favored.

Is this true?

M. Bosworth Smith, M. A., of Trinity College, Oxford, says: "Hospitals are the direct outcome of Buddhism and lunatic asylums are the result of Mohammedan influence."

Emily Adams, in the *New Ideal*, informs us that dispensaries were in existence in the fourth century, B. C., in India, and in the fifth century, B. C., in Athens. That the Egyptians and Greeks—prior to the Christian era—provided for the insane. That the Mohammedans built insane asylums in seventh century; while the first Christian asylum for the insane was built in 1409.

Lecky says: "The Mohammedans preceded the Christians in the establishment of lunatic asylums."

Judge Richard B. Westbrook, of Philadelphia, says: "Four hundred years B. C., an emperor of India established hospitals throughout his empire. Ancient Greece had many charitable institutions. Even hospitals for the lower animals existed among the pagans."

Hon. Andrew D. White says: "In the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries the Arabs and Turks made a large and merciful provision for lunatics. . . . The Moslem treatment of the insane has been infinitely more merciful than the system universal throughout Christendom."

In view of the facts here presented, and of many more of a similar character which could be added, if space permitted, am I not justified in assuming that the world would have been better off without—than with—Christianity?

I have not a word to utter against the many truly estimable *individuals*, who are component parts of the Christian Church; but, as a *system*, I regard it as most pernicious.

When I speak of Christianity, it is not with any disrespect for the character of Christ; for I yield to no one in admiration of the lofty purposes which were the guiding principle of his pure and gentle and altruistic life.

The Christianity of the Church is just what its priests and ministers have made it.

The religion of Augustine, of Thomas Aquinas, of Calvin, of Johnathan Edwards, of Spurgeon, and of T. Dewitt Talmage, is by no means the religion of Christ.

The former has no more resemblance to the latter than ostentation, arrogance, bigotry, hypocrisy, fear and hate have

to simplicity, meekness, charitableness, ingenuousness, confidence and love.

Greg, in his *Creed of Christendom*, says: "Popular Christianity is not the religion of Jesus."

In the *Arena* for July last, is an article by Rev. Carlos Martyn, D. D., called *Church-ianity vs. Christ-ianity*, in which he says of the former: "It is like counterfeit coin; current, but false. . . . It puts the emphasis on belief, when it should put it on conduct. . . . It builds cathedrals, not men. . . . Religion is transformed from a principle into an institution. . . . We look for Christ and find a church. . . . Phariseeism is resurrected and baptized with a Christian name. . . . Churchianity has been the resolute opposer of every single forward step."

The religion of Christ is that simple, "pure religion and undefiled" (described in the Epistle of James;) the only two characteristics or requirements of which are the doing of beneficent deeds and the living of an "unspotted" life.

## DOUBT.

IN the New York *Observer* recently appeared an article from the pen of Rev. Talbot W. Chambers, D. D., entitled *Religious Doubt and the Remedy*.

The thought that first occurred to my mind, in reading the article, was, why seek a "remedy" for doubt, any more than for any other function of the brain? Certainly no Protestant (Dr. Chambers, for example) can, with any consistency, seek for a remedy for the privilege of doubting, unless he denies (as does the Roman Catholic Church) the right of private judgment; which right Protestants have ever claimed as the main and most distinguishing feature of the difference between them and the Romish Church.

What is embraced in the exercise of the right of private judgment? Certainly the right to doubt is, for you cannot be said to exercise the right of private judgment without doubting whatever your private judgment thinks proper to question.

The Romish Church is perfectly consistent and honest, and the Protestant Church inconsistent and dishonest, on this question.

The dilemma in which the Protestant Church finds itself may be illustrated by quoting from Rev. George Armstrong, of the Church of England, viz :

"If I deny the right of private judgment, the Church calls me a Romanist; if I acknowledge it, she brands me as a heretic."

What would be the effect if Dr. Chambers should succeed in finding a remedy for doubt? Why, all progress in the realm of thought would be arrested.

What has doubt done for religion? Had it not been for the doubt of Luther, there had been no Protestant Church.

Had it not been for the doubt of Christ, there had been no Christianity.

What ought to be thought of a religion, the first lesson in which is that you must not doubt?

Dr. Chambers does not practice what he preaches. He was a member of the commission which brought the new version of the Bible into being. What suggested this new version, if not the doubt of Dr. C. and his associates as to the incorrectness of the King James version?

But why this clerical war upon doubt—upon religious doubt? Simply because doubt is the beginning of reason, and because reason is certain annihilation to theology. See what these small beginnings of doubt are doing in all Protestant Churches. Is it anything but reason, induced by doubt, that is making such inroads into the creeds and beliefs of the hitherto Orthodox Churches?

The religious beliefs of to-day are totally different from what they were a generation ago. Who (excepting Spurgeon, De Witt Talmage and Col. Elliot F. Shepard) believes, now, in a literal hell? Who believes in the six days, of twenty-four hours each, story of creation; in the "fall of man" (now that science has demonstrated the *rise* of man from lower orders of beings?) Who believes, literally, in the stories of Jonah, of Joshua, of Elisha, etc.? What, but *doubt*, has wrought this change? What, but the workings of doubt in the minds of ecclesiastics themselves, has induced the liberal thought which we now so frequently hear from the clergy? Read the utterances of Rev. Dr. Briggs, in his recent address before the students of the Union Theological Seminary; every liberal saying in which was applauded to the echo. "I rejoice at this age of rationalism, with all its wonderful achievements in philosophy," says Dr. Briggs.

Rev. Phillips Brooks says: "The minister should be the model of tolerance of what is honest doubt."

Rev. Dr. Rylance says he regards "doubt as a rational thing; a fact to be dealt with rationally, not professionally or by anathema. . . . The rationalist, agnostic and material-



ist, have done good, and have reacted on theology in a healthful way."

Archbishop Leighton has said: "Never be afraid to doubt. . . . Doubt, in order that you may end in believing."

And what has doubt done for science? Has it not instituted a truer system of thought? Has it not given us Copernicus, Bruno, Newton, Kepler, Humboldt, Darwin and Hæckel; whose brilliant discoveries would have been hid from the world had doubt been silenced?

It is doubt that has done the intelligent and beneficial service of transforming alchemy into chemistry; astrology into astronomy; fiat strata into geology; the biblical origin of man into biology; the confusion of tongues into philology; superstition into philosophy; tradition into history; myth into reality; legend into verity; fable into truth; arrogant dogmatism into unpretentious agnosticism; comatose credulity into vitalized thought; unquestioning faith into the spirit of inquiry; demoniacal possession into dementia; a personal devil into an impersonal evil influence; the capricious gods of old into the immutable laws of nature; creation into evolution.

"Doubt is the first step to mental liberty."

"From the first doubt man has continued to advance."—(Ingersoll.)

"The act of doubting is the necessary antecedent to all progress."—(Buckle.)

"Doubt is the mother of inquiry."

"A man's doubts are the children of his brain."—(H. O. Pentecost.) They are the offspring of mental activity; would it not be unnatural to devitalize the progeny?

"Each one's prerogative 'tis to doubt:

'How do you know?' is truth's own scout."

"With knowledge doubt increases."—(Goethe.)

"If thou hast honest doubts,

Conceal them not;

For doubt is better than dishonesty."—(Shakespeare.)

"There lives more faith in honest doubt

(Believe me) than in half the creeds."—(Tennyson.)

Doubt of what we do not know to be truth, is the promptings of our highest intellectual and moral nature.

Doubt is a sentinel on the watch-tower of the brain, charged with the duty of sounding an alarm, whenever its enemies—superstition, falsehood, ignorance and unreason—attempt to invade the citadel of truth.

Doubt is the herald of progress ; the genius of reason ; the pathway to truth ; the advance guard in the contest with intellectual darkness.

## CAN CHRISTIANS BE JUST ?

**I**N the February number of the *North American Review* is an article entitled *Can Lawyers be Honest?* That interrogatory has suggested the caption to this article, and it seems a pertinent inquiry in view of the fact that my observations have led me to believe that Christians are, as a class, more or less unjust (consciously or unconsciously) to those who differ from them in opinion.

Let me ask the question, can Christians be just who, while insisting that there should be no connection of the Church with the State, are opposed to laws which could make the separation of Church and State a fact as well as a theory ?

How few Christians there are who favor equal taxation of church property, non-sectarian public schools, discontinuance of chaplains, repeal of laws making Sunday a religious day, cessation of the appointment of days for religious observance, no appropriation for sectarian purposes—every one of which are questions involving the principle of equal rights and exact justice to every citizen.

Is it just that those who do not believe in the religion of the Church are compelled, indirectly, to support such churches by reason of their exemption from the operation of the tax law, the effect being precisely the same as though non-church-goers were compelled to contribute *directly* to such support ?

Again. Is it just (as James Parton has expressed it) to tax a workingman's house to its full value and let a million-dollar cathedral or church go untaxed ?

Is it just that appropriations for religious institutions are annually made by our legislatures in the very face of a law positively prohibiting such appropriations?

Are such Christians just as encourage the taking of the government money to disseminate the dogmas of their respective churches among the Indians, when it is done in violation of a provision of the Constitution "respecting the (non) establishment of religion?"

To the honor of one Christian body (the Baptists) be it known that they recently refused to take the portion of the public money which was offered to them, regarding the acceptance of such money as wrong in principle.

Is it just that my children should be taught in the public schools a religion which I regard as the main obstacle to the advancement of knowledge? Did impartial justice suggest the utterance of President Seelye, of Amherst College, that the Christian religion should be taught in our public schools, "whether the consciences of the people approve it or not?"

Is it just that I should be prevented from pursuing my avocations and reasonable pleasures on any day of the week, because certain Christian fanatics have a senseless reverence for a particular day?

Is it just to the tens of thousands of workingmen who have but one day in the week in which to visit our museums of art and natural history, that they are denied this privilege because about a dozen Christian members of each board of trustees of these museums have certain views on the question of Sunday observance? Was the money contributed by the city to these institutions given for the purpose of promulgating certain religious ideas, or was it given for the benefit of, and to exert a moral and refining influence upon, the masses?

Can Christians be just who defend the action of those in control of Girard College in persistently influencing "the tender minds of the orphans" in matters of religion, in utter disregard of the expressed provisions of the great benefactor's will?

Were the Christian trustees of the Columbia, S. C., Semin-

ary and of the Vanderbilt University just to Professors Woodrow and Winchell in expelling them—the one from the chair of geology, because he believed in the demonstrated fact that man existed on this globe more than six thousand years ago, and the other from the chair of natural science because he believed in the generally accepted fact of evolution?

Can Christians place a just estimate upon the discoveries of Copernicus, Humboldt, Darwin, when influenced by the false assumptions of the Bible regarding Astronomy, Geology and Biology? Was Spurgeon's estimate of these discoveries just when he said that he "positively hated advanced thought?"

Can Christians be just in their estimate of woman when governed by the teachings of the Bible, the writers of which held woman as far inferior to man, telling her "he shall rule over thee?"

Can Christians be just who class those who differ in opinion from them with the worst elements of society? Is it just to speak in the same sentence of "liars, thieves, murderers—and unbelievers?"

Are Christians just to those who are not Christians in claiming that there is no morality, or humanity or benevolence outside of Christianity? What impertinence as well as injustice to arrogate to themselves a monopoly of the ennobling qualities of our common nature.

Are Christians just in their estimate of *other* believers in superstition? The superstitions of the Christian Church do not differ essentially from other superstitions. Both inculcate a belief in ghosts—holy and unholy—in the personality of evil and good—in a capricious Providence and generally in the reign of supernaturalism instead of that of natural law. Christian missionaries are sent abroad at the expense of tens of millions of dollars annually to induce what are called "the Heathen" to make an exchange of their superstitions for those of Christianity. It is a mooted question as to whether one is any improvement on the other. Either are utterly repugnant to reflective, intelligent beings.

Have Christians been, and can they be, just to Voltaire and to his service to mankind in his efforts for mental emancipation? Says James Russell Lowell: "To Voltaire, more than to any one man, we owe it that we can now think and speak as we choose."

"The pen is mightier than the sword" is an axiom the truth of which was never more truly illustrated than in the case of Thomas Paine. He accomplished far more by his pen toward the independence of these States than did the sword of Washington. Are Christians just to him in not owning their gratefulness for his incomparable services? Or, rather, was there ever greater injustice done—more ingratitude shown—than in the slanders of the church against him whose religion ("to do good") was infinitely higher and purer than that of his traducers?

Was the Christian father of Charles Bradlaugh just when he turned him from his home because he expressed dissent from the (unreasonable) thirty-nine articles of the English Church? Was the Christian sentiment of England just which endeavored to keep Mr. Bradlaugh out of parliament because he had his own (honest) opinions on matters of religion, and because he bravely fought for the rights of those whom Christianity sought to enslave? Labouchere says of Bradlaugh that he was, "in private life, thoroughly true and amiable; in public life, ready to sacrifice popularity for his convictions of right; whose standard of duty was a very high one and who lived up to it; whose life was an example to Christians, for he abounded in every virtue."

Have Christians been just to the brightest intellect of our century, the beauty and grandeur of whose utterances have been equalled by no mortal since the days of Shakespeare; whose heart has ever been in sympathy with the oppressed of all religions; who has been the most valiant knight of any age in battling for the boon of mental liberty; whose sacrifices for honest thought are greater than can be estimated; whose eloquent voice has been so often lifted against the greatest enemy of progress, viz: the superstition of religion. There

has not lived one endowed by nature with more kindliness, sympathy, rectitude, purity, pathos, vivacity, fertility, sublimity, nobility, originality, comprehensiveness, genius, than Col. Ingersoll. And this is the man who, for a generation, has been the victim of the grossest misrepresentation and villification on the part of Christians ; simply and only because (as he has himself expressed it) his " effort has been to make man superior to superstition."

I could put the question, " Can Christians be Just?" in its almost every phrase, and the answer must, of necessity, be in the negative, for it is impossible that Christians can be just so long as they accept the (unjust) teachings of the Bible and believe in the (irrational) doctrine promulgated by such councils as that of Trent and such assemblies as that of Westminster.

## GOD.

A FEW centuries ago, to say that there was no God, was to invite the stake. A few generations ago, to deny the Christian's God, was succeeded by imprisonment. A few decades ago, to question the existence of a personal God, was to incur the odium of public opinion.

Thanks to the advance of liberal thought, a Christian clergyman (Rev. Minot J. Savage) is enabled to say, as he did recently, "The question as to whether God exists or not, is, like any other question, open for discussion." Another Christian clergyman, Rev. W. H. Thomas of Chicago, says, "I question whether or not it is possible for the human intellect ever to stand without the possibility of doubt with reference to God."

Thomas Jefferson said, "Question with boldness even the existence of God."

"Who, what, and where is God?" has been asked millions of times; but no intelligent, satisfactory answer has ever been given. Even Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage of Brooklyn has said, "If you ask me how a man can know about God, I cannot tell you."

What is meant by the question, "Do you believe in God?" Has the questioner any conception whatever of the import of the question? Not the slightest. Rev. John W. Chadwick says, "The belief in God is as elusive to our logic as a drop of mercury is to our touch." Joubert has said, "It is easy to believe in God if you are not asked to define him." But why say "him?" Is God a person, and of the masculine gender? Emerson says, "When I speak of God, I prefer to say *it*." And what does personality imply? It implies indi-



viduality, isolation, identity, outline, limitation, form, distinct and separate existence. Are these consistent with the divine attribute of Ubiquity?

Rev. J. M. Capes (of the Church of England) says, "The word 'personality' is a plain assertion that God is limited in his substance, and is therefore a denial of his infinity." The orthodox creed says that "God is without body or parts." Surely this is not descriptive of personality.

It says in the Bible that "man is made in the image of God;" and Matthew Arnold says that "man has returned the compliment, and says that God is made in the image of man." Rev. J. W. Chadwick says: "That man is made in the image of God is not a more acceptable saying than that God is made in the image of man."

This is illustrated by paintings in the picture galleries of Europe, where God is represented as a fine-looking old gentleman with a flowing white beard. And why not, if personality is insisted upon? for man is the highest personality known to man. Says Dr. Hedge: "Man fashions his God in his own image and endows him with the attributes he has learned to respect in the wisest and best of men." Says Rev. J. W. Chadwick: "Mr. Ingersoll's saying, 'An honest God's the noblest work of man,' is not a mere witticism—it is profoundly true."

But how very short of a perfect being is the God of the Bible. In that book he is represented as "petulant, jealous, cruel, vindictive, revengeful, unjust, untruthful, tricky, immoral." (H. O. Pentecost.) In that book the attributes of Infinity are taken from him. The Bible says he has a "local habitation," and that he "comes and goes." This is inconsistent with Omnipresence. The Bible says he "repented that he had made man." This is inconsistent with Omniscience. The Bible says he "could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley." This is inconsistent with Omnipotence.

The Bible also represents him as delighting in sacrificial blood; as sending "a lying spirit" to mislead his own prophets; as ordering the inhuman butchery of thousands of

men, married women and children, and the capture, for the soldiery, of the maidens !

As Judge Westbrook has said, "The low conception and gross representations of the character of God should put the blush upon the cheek of cannibalism itself."

The late Phineas T. Barnum (a thoroughly religious man) said, "The orthodox faith painted God as so revengeful a being that you could hardly distinguish the difference between God and the Devil."

Is it the "God of love" that we read of in Deut. xxviii, from the 15th verse—which sounds like the anathemas of the Pope of Rome?

"The God men make for men—  
A God impossible to common sense."

It is a singular fact that those whom Christians have termed Infidels are the very persons who (so far as they believed in a God) had the most exalted idea of Deity.

Thomas Paine's conception of God far transcends that of the orthodox Christian.

Lord Bacon says, "An ill opinion of God is worse than Atheism."

"Orthodoxy made God a capricious tyrant, and Infidelity sought relief by abolishing him." (*N. Y. Herald.*)

Col. Ingersoll said, "From the aspersions of the pulpit I would rescue the reputation of the Deity."

Whether there is a God or not, it is safe to say that the *orthodox* God does *not* exist.

The question recurs : Is there any God?

La Place says : "The telescope sweeps the skies without finding God." Lalande has said, "I have searched through the heavens, and nowhere have I found a trace of God."

Mr. T. B. Wakeman says : "There is no possible room anywhere for an extra-mundane God. The true God is the totality of the correlated Universe." This he denominates "monism," in which term he finds the philosophy of Bruno, Spinoza, Comte, and Haeckel.

I think that but comparatively few thoughtful, intelligent beings believe in a *personality* called God. There are those who believe in God as "that vast power which rules in the Universe in all things by law." (Hon. Andrew D. White.) Matthew Arnold says, "All things seem to us to have what we call a law of their being ; whether we call this God or not, is a matter of choice." Rev. M. J. Savage says, "There are no laws of God except the natural laws of the universe." Tennyson says : "God is law." John Fiske says, "God is not will, but law ;" and Rev. William Wilberforce Newton says, "If law is God, then there is no personality, and if there is no personality then there is no will."

There is no consensus of opinion as to what is the definition of the term God. It is the most unmeaning of words. Besides the God of personality there is the God of immanence and the God of transcendence.

Among believers in the last of these may be included Francis Ellingwood Abbott, PH. D.; Dr. Robert G. Eccles ; Prof. Lewis G. Jayne ; Sir Wm. Hamilton (who says, "As a transcendental is an unconditioned being, God cannot be scientifically known ;") and Herbert Spencer (who says, "There is a power behind humanity and behind all things . . . the Unknowable.")

Believers in a God of immanence may include Rev. S. R. Calthorp, who says, "Nature and God are the same ;" Rev. J. W. Chadwick : "There are not God *and* nature—God *is* nature ;" Goethe : "He who rises not high enough to see God and nature as one, knows neither ;" Rev. Lyman Abbott, D. D. : "God and nature are not dual. We have abandoned the carpenter conception of creation, and are substituting for it the far grander conception of a God *immanent* in nature ;" Rev. Dr. Greer (of St. Bartholomew's Church) : "God is immanent in all human life ;" Alexander Pope :

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,  
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul."

Are not these Pantheistic or Monistic, rather than Deistic or Theistic conceptions?

Every age, every nation, has had its God ; differing only as human conceptions of Deity differ, but known under different names : to the Norseman as Odin, to the Egyptian as Osiris, to the Phœnician as Baal, to the Babylonian as Belus, to the Persian as Ormuzd, to the Hindoo as Brahma, to the Greek as Zeus, to the Roman as Jupiter, to the Mohammedan as Allah, to the Jew as Jehovah, to the American Indian as the Great Spirit, to the African Pygmies as Yer, and to the Christian as God ; all the same or similar creations of the imagination—for, of course, it is impossible for the finite to *know* the Infinite. Henry Frank (late of the Congregational Church at Jamestown, N. Y.) has said : “ You ask me what God is. If I knew, *I* would be God.”

Agnosticism can neither affirm nor deny the existence of God. It certainly cannot affirm the existence of that which it is impossible to demonstrate ; and Rev. R. Heber Newton has said, “ You cannot demonstrate God.”

## RELIGIOUS DECADENCE.

“Through clouds of doubt and creeds of fear  
A light is breaking, calm and clear.”—*Whittier.*

NONE of the “signs of the times” are more conspicuous than the indications that the days of religion, or at least of orthodox or ecclesiastical or theological religion, are fast passing away. In no generation that is past has so much been accomplished in this regard as in the present. The air is filled with the boldest expressions of those who have revolted against the unreasoning theology which has held the minds of the people in its tyrannical grasp. The determination to exercise the reasoning faculties, to indulge in what is known as the “higher criticism,” instead of permitting our intelligence to be subordinated to blind, unquestioning faith; together with the great discoveries in the sciences—in astronomy, in geology, in paleontology, in biology,—have well-nigh exterminated the theology of the first half of the century. The press (daily and weekly,) the monthly magazines, books innumerable, scientists, philosophers, scholars and theologians (of more or less liberal views,) are demanding a religion that invites discussion, that fears not investigation, and that is in the fullest accord with the latest discoveries of science.

“Criticism is at work with knife and fire. Let us cut down everything that is dead and harmful, every kind of dead orthodoxy, every species of effete ecclesiasticism.” (Rev. Charles K. Briggs, D. D.)

Orthodoxy and ecclesiasticism are being undermined more by the discoveries of Darwin and Hæckel than by almost any other influence. The accepted theory (or rather recognized fact) of evolution teaches the *rise* of man from lower orders of

beings, in opposition to the rejected dogma of the *fall* of man. The argument adduced therefrom being that if there was no fall of man, then there was no Adamic sin ; if no sin then no atonement—no eternal punishment ; and so the whole theological structure totters to its fall.

“ In the light of to-day ” (says Rev. M. J. Savage,) the ‘ plan of salvation ’ has no rational excuse for existing one day longer.”

“ Christianity is seriously weakened by the spirit of doubt and speculation so largely fostered by modern science. It has lost its hold on large numbers of people.”—(*N. Y. Tribune.*)

“ The scientists treat theology with contempt. . . . Scientific skepticism is invading the pulpit, and all that distinguishes the Bible from any treatise on moral philosophy is gradually being surrendered by leading theologians. . . . They are losing religion as well as theology.” (Buchanan’s *Journal of Man.*)

Every advanced student must know the characteristic spirit of the age to be a general revolt against traditional theories.” (I. H. Hyslop in *Princeton Review*, Sept., 1888.)

Rev. Dr. A. J. F. Behrends demands that “ theology—like science and philosophy—shall deal only with what can be accurately known.”

Rev. R. Heber Newton says : “ Faith has outlived the superstitious doctrines of the atonement and of eternal punishment. . . . The growth of knowledge has intensified the decay of ecclesiasticism. . . . The modern world is passing through the greatest change of intellectual outlook which has probably ever been experienced by man. . . . Men in ever-increasing numbers are exiling themselves from the homes of their fathers, because the priesthoods of Rome and of Protestantism allow them no freedom of thought and speech in the ancestral mansions, but only the slavery of superstition or the silence of cowardice.”

Rev. Hugh Curry said at the Church Congress in Cleveland, O. : “ The once popular notions regarding the character of the life eternal and of the resurrection of the dead, have

ceased to command the assent of the great body of intelligent believers.”

A correspondent of the *N. Y. Tribune* from Canton, O., writing of the MacQueary heresy (disbelief in a hell, in the physical resurrection of Christ and of his virgin birth,) says: “The theology of the Church is in a state of flux; . . . the old order is passing away. . . . If we are going to condemn Mr. MacQueary . . . we shall have to condemn a *multitude* of other clergymen.”

Rev. Geo. C. Lorimer, D. D., in the *Arena* for September, says: “Heresy is in the air. . . . Everywhere it is being discussed. . . . Religious papers are apparently staggering at the inroads which the so-called higher criticism has made of late.”

The *Philosophical Journal* says: “There is an advance in heresy all along the line. What was ‘infidelity’ twenty years ago is now taught in orthodox theological seminaries and from orthodox pulpits.”

In March last, *eight* heresy trials were going on in Pittsburg, Pa., alone.

Rev. Thomas Dixon (Baptist) speaking of the coming trial of Rev. Dr. Briggs, says: “It belongs to the credulence and ignorance and superstition of barbaric times. It smells of roasting flesh. . . . Is it a crime to think? If so the days of the Church are numbered. The fight means reason against stupidity—miscalled faith.”

The *Boston Journal* recently said: “The world is growing very sick of theological *in*-humanity.”

The St. Louis *Advocate* says: “Robert Elsmere and John Ward preach to us instead of Peter and Paul. We have surrendered faith to philosophy—revelation to reason.”

Froude says: “Theologians no longer speak with authority. . . . Those who uphold orthodoxy cannot tell on what ground to defend it. . . . Along the whole line the defending forces of orthodoxy are falling back, not knowing where to make a stand.”

Rev. John W. Chadwick says: “The disintegration of the

popular theology is going on as rapidly as any one opposed to it can wish. . . . From scores of magazines and papers, from hundreds of pulpits and professors' chairs, the trumpet blast is summoning to judgment the traditional doctrines of the churches. . . . Probably never at any time in the world's history has there been such an immense deflection from the traditional creeds as during the last thirty years. . . . I have not the least idea that our popular Christianity is going to be the religion of the future."

"Infidelity is in the air."—(*Christian at Work.*)

"A deluge of infidelity is rapidly spreading over Europe. In the United States and Canada, Agnosticism is cropping out everywhere." (Archbishop Lynch, R. C., Toronto.)

"It is in vain to ignore or deny that a glacier of unbelief is moving down from the higher moral latitudes."—(*Western Christian Advocate.*)

"A collapse of religious belief of the most complete and tremendous kind is now apparently at hand."—(Prof. Goldwin Smith.)

"A process of religious decomposition has been going on for many years past."—(*Saturday Review.*)

"What a change in religious sentiment and temper since thirty years ago."—(Oliver Wendell Holmes.)

"Latitudinarianism is spreading rapidly in the Church of England."—(Bishop Harold Brown.)

"Rationalism is destroying religion."—(Rev. W. W. Everts, D. D.)

"Christianity is declining."—(Rev. Alfred Niven, D. D.)

"The great mass of mankind have been slowly but irresistibly breaking away from the anchorage of dogma."—(*N. Y. Commercial Advertiser.*)

The public mind has slid from the old [religious] grooves." (*The Congregationalist.*)

"The old hulk of theology must be abandoned."—(Rev. Frank Dixon, Oakland, Cal.)

Rev. J. H. Rylance recently preached a sermon on the "decadence of ecclesiasticism," calling upon the Church to



recognize and appreciate the fact that "the spirit and methods of mediævalism are *gone*."

Rev. Philip Schaff, D. D., says: "Now that the spirit of revision has spread over the Christian world, a return to narrow and exclusive orthodoxy is simply impossible."

"The old sanctions of ecclesiasticism are losing their force with thinking people."—(Rev. James B. Watson in *North American Review*.)

"We are now on the eve of the greatest change in traditional views that has taken place since the birth of Christianity."—(Prof. LeConte.)

"Religion is losing its hold upon men."—(Rev. Dr. McGlynn.)

"Religion is rapidly ceasing to be an integral part of our social life."—(Bishop Gilmour, *Forum*, June, 1888.)

"Religion is now called upon to show why it should any longer claim our allegiance."—(John Fiske.)

"A great change is going on in many of our American colleges as to the place allotted to religion. Some of them are abandoning one position after another, until little is left. Unless Christian sentiment arrest it, *religion will disappear* from a number of our colleges."—(Rev. James McCosh, D. D., late President Princeton College.)

Professor Swing of Chicago says of the contest of reason with Christianity: "Whether *anything* of Christianity will remain, is the question."

Archdeacon Farrar says: "Scarcely a single truth of capital importance in science has ever been enunciated without having to struggle for life against the fury of theological dogmatists. . . . A great Puritan divine thought he had checked the progress of astronomical inquiry when he said that he preferred to believe the Holy Ghost rather than Newton; yet Newton was absolutely right and the Puritan divine hopelessly wrong."

Rev. Henry P. Smith, of Lane Theological Seminary, says: "A rigid insistence upon the Westminster doctrines . . . would vacate every chair of exegesis in the Church."

Rev. Dr. Van Dyke, Jr., says: "Why should we retain in our creed what none of us believe?"

Rev. Dr. Van Dyke, Sr., says: "If we cannot have liberty *and* orthodoxy, let orthodoxy go."

Rev. T. De Witt Talmage says: "Now that the electric lights have been turned on the imperfections of our creed, . . . let us put it aside respectfully and get a brand new one."

No one influence towards undermining superstitious theological beliefs has been more potent than the pungent utterances of the greatest thinker, the most convincing writer, the most brilliant orator of the age. Col. Ingersoll's masterly and unanswerable exposure of the absurdities of orthodox theology are being recognized by intelligent men and women, the world over—even in the orthodox Church.

At a meeting of Presbytery in New York city in 1890 a clergyman, opposed to advanced thought, said that his "church was taking Col. Ingersoll as its guide and leader."

Rev. Thomas Dixon, speaking of Shedd's theology, says: "If I believed such stuff, I would lay down my ministry to-morrow and join hands with Ingersoll."

Rev. Samuel W. Small, of Philadelphia, says: "What he (Ingersoll) said was sought for, eagerly read and discussed by *millions* of the reading public of the world. . . . If his speeches are worthy of being printed in the secular press, they are worthy of attention and answer from the editors of our Church papers, *provided* the latter are *able* to answer them."

Rev. John R. Paxton, of New York city, says: "This is an age when people analyze. . . . The Church is undoubtedly on the brink of revolution. . . . A man like Ingersoll would not receive a hearing to-day. *The ministers have gone beyond him.*"

In the same vein of thought the New York *Sun* said recently: "Ingersoll and Huxley and the whole band of avowed Agnostics and Infidels are not doing so much to bring about the downfall of religious faith as the majority of the delegates to the Presbyterian General Assembly are to-day unwittingly

doing by assailing the very foundations of faith with the weapons and strategy of mere human reason."

The *statistical* evidence of the decadence of religion (or at least of the Protestant religion) is most convincing.

Peri Andrews in the *Forum* for August, 1890, says: "In 1840 there was one Protestant church (in New York city) to every 2,000 persons, and in 1888 there was one to every 4,000 persons."

Rev. Dr. Morris reported to the Presbyterian General Assembly in May, 1889, that there were six churches *without any* membership, and in 108 churches a membership on an average, of but three and one-half persons.

Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage said recently: "Within the last twenty-five years the churches in this country have averaged less than two conversions a year each. There has been an average of four or five deaths in the churches. *We gain two: we lose four.*"

Rev. George J. Mingens says: "Of the 40,000 people who die every year in New York city, not ten per cent. believe in God."

A correspondent at what has been termed the "garden spot of Ohio"—the Western Reserve (settled in great part by New Englanders,) writing to the *Religious Herald* of Hartford, Ct., says: "In places where churches were well sustained fifty years ago there are *no* religious influences."

Rev. A. C. Peabody, D. D., says: "Church attendance has sadly fallen off."

Rev. Roderick Terry, D. D., (N. Y. city,) says: "We cannot fail to notice the falling off of attendance at religious worship and the apparent loss of respect for religious ideas and customs."

Rev. George F. Pentecost, D. D., says: "There are 250 churches in Massachusetts which report but *two* conversions, *all told*, last year."

The *Independent* said, four years since, that there were 1,000 *unemployed* Congregational ministers in the United States.

The *N. Y. Evangelist* says: "Four-fifths of the young men of the country are skeptics."

Henry Ward Beecher said, not long since: "Ninety per cent. of those engaged in the higher field of research are Agnostics."

The *Andover Review* quotes Dr. Dunning as saying that "there are *ninety-five* towns in Maine where *no* religious services are held."

The *Mail and Express*, Dec. 10, 1890, says: "One-fourth of the population of California are between 16 and 21 years of age; only *five* per cent. of these ever attend church."

Rev. J. W. Weddell says: "Only one in ten of the population in Chicago are Christians." Dr. Dorchester says that in Colorado it is only one in twenty. In Nevada one in forty-six; in Wyoming one in eighty-one, and in Arizona one in 685.

The St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* says that "of 85,000 men and boys in public in that city on a given Sunday, 75,000 are engaged in public sports and amusements."

Rev. Wm. Lloyd says: "There is a woeful lack of real earnest Christianity. The class of indifferentists grows daily. The costly temples are not half-filled; and many of those who go have no vital feeling."

These are a few of the many testimonies to the decadence of old religious ideas; and they are mostly from those who deplore such decadence, but who are compelled by the facts to admit it.

New religious ideas are taking the place of the old. Not only a new but a true religion is now being demanded, and is fast approaching. A religion without dogma, without creed, without fear, without theology. As Rev. R. Heber Newton says, "The churches must distinguish between theology and religion." A religion which invites criticism and is in perfect accord with the sciences; which basks in the sunshine of reason, and which is no more like ecclesiastical religion than are the kindly utterances attributed to Christ like the fiendish acts of Tomas de Torquemada and John Calvin. A religion

of humanity, of altruism, of love, of justice. A religion that discards the traditional, the fabulous, the miraculous, and that worships at the shrine of truth. The dawn of such a religion is upon us ; and faith in advancing civilization, in progressive intelligence, in growing tolerance, in the ever onward march of the sciences, foretells its meridian triumph.

“The hour is coming when men’s holy Church  
Shall melt away in ever-widening walls,  
And be for all mankind ; and in its place  
A mightier Church shall come, whose covenant word  
Shall be the deeds of love. Not *Credo* then ;  
*Amo* shall be the password through its gates ;  
Man shall not ask his brother any more  
‘Believest thou?’ but, ‘Lovest thou?’”

## FAITH.

OF all the absurd and illogical positions assumed by religion none seems more so than that which makes faith the basis of belief.

No belief can, by any possibility, be founded on faith alone ; there must be the understratum of the rational faculty to give faith proper direction and intelligent exercise.

“Reason must be the rock-bed of our faith. \* \* \* We should submit every article of faith to the test of reason.” (Rev. R. Heber Newton.)

No matter how parsimonious a use is made of this faculty, it is absolutely indispensable that it should (to however limited a degree) precede faith, even with the most credulous of zealots.

A transposition of the proposition (that belief is by faith) is the correct one, faith being dependent upon belief rather than belief upon faith ; faith is a consequence of belief rather than that belief is a consequence of faith, belief leading rather than following faith. Even Cardinal Manning (*N. A. Review*, Oct., 1888,) says : “The last act of reasoning precedes the first act of faith.”

Reason and faith are distinct qualities, independent in their action.

“Reason, subjected to faith, ceases to be reason.”

Belief is not a function of faith. It is the office of reason (and of reason alone) to determine on matters of belief.

“No one can teach belief in things unknown (or urge to) faith in that which reason fails to see or justify.”

It may be said of faith, that to the extent reason is con-

vinced of the truth of what is believed, it intensifies belief. This is all that can be legitimately claimed for faith.

There is naught so ignorant, irrational, indiscriminating and cruel as blind, "Unquestioned faith, unvitalized by thought," as the history of fanaticism in all ages of the world has demonstrated.

"Blind faith is the one unpardonable sin."—(Huxley.)

There is no fact more patent than that belief is involuntary. You cannot believe by the mere exercise of the will any more than you can possess yourself of riches by a similar exercise.

A remarkably clear and convincing treatise on this subject is found in Dwight H. Olmstead, Esq.'s, book, "The Protestant Faith," but which may be, for the present occasion, summarized in one quotation from it, viz. : "Belief is simply the result of thought."

"Belief is not the child of *volition*, but of *conviction*."

"Belief is, in no case, directly dependent on the will."  
(Rev. Mark Hopkins, D. D.)

"Belief is not a matter of will, but evidence."

"Faith is the result of evidence." (Rev. Wright Robertson.)

"Faith is an effect, not a cause."—(Judge Westbrook.)

"Faith should be rational, rather than scriptural.—"(Prof. Smyth, of Andover.)

The Christian Church falsely assumes that to believe is a meritorious act. "It is neither a virtue nor a vice. To believe can never be a duty."

Greg, in his "Creed of Christendom," says: "Belief is an effect produced by a cause. Being therefore an effect and not an act, it cannot be a merit. The moment it becomes a distinctly voluntary act it ceases to be genuine. It is then brought about by the will of the individual, not by the *bona fide* operation of evidence upon the mind, which brings us to the *reductio ad absurdum* that belief can only become meritorious by ceasing to be honest."

*Belief by faith*, which religion exacts of its devotees as a pledge of fidelity, is immoral in its tendencies, cruel in its practices and degrading in its consequences.

Through "belief by faith" the Parsee lacerates his flesh until the blood flows in streams from his wounds.

Through "belief by faith" the Hindoo mother casts her offspring to the Ganges and the Hindoo widow climbs the funeral pyre of her husband.

Through "belief by faith" in—and to appease—the gods, the Carthagenians put to death the most promising children of their nobility.

Through "belief by faith" the torch was applied to the literary treasures of Alexandria; once by Moslem and once by Christian bigots.

It was "belief by faith" that urged a fanatical and brutal mob, led by a Christian patriarch, to the murder of Hypatia, one of the most gifted women of either ancient or modern times.

Through "belief by faith" intellectual darkness pervaded Europe for a thousand years.

Through "belief by faith" Copernicus was intimidated, Galileo terrorized, and Bruno burned.

Through "belief by faith" in the sacredness of certain days the charge for absolution for marrying on days appointed by the church was two pounds, while that for killing a human being was but three shillings.

Through "belief by faith" the Romish devotee presents the painful and humiliating spectacle of ascending holy stairs (!) on bended knee.

Through "belief by faith" intelligence is insulted by the claim that bread and wine are transmuted into Omnipotence.

Through "belief by faith" the sprinkling of water betokens an *eternity* of happiness.

"Belief by faith" takes young men and young women from under the parental roof and incarcerates them in prisons—called monasteries and nunneries.

It was "belief by faith" in the teachings of the Christian Church, that recently prompted an ex-priest in Canada to abandon his lawful wife and two innocent babes, because he



had repented (!) of having violated his priestly vows in entering the marriage state.

“Belief by faith” sends millions of weary pilgrims to Mecca, and other millions to Treves, for a glimpse of the holy (!) coat.

“Belief by faith” rejects the fact of natural causes for famine, pestilence, earthquakes and tornadoes, and bows in abject fear before some supposed spirit of evil.

“Belief by faith” opens the portals of the “Heavenly Jerusalem” to the murderer, whose last hours are comforted by the assurances of his “spiritual adviser,” that eleventh-hour repentance is as efficacious as a whole life of uprightness.

Through “belief by faith” the Italian brigand bows in adoration to the Madonna, and straightway plunges his stiletto into the heart of the wayfarer.

The doctrine of “belief by faith” plunged the knife of the Pocassett imitator of Abraham into the heart of his innocent child.

“Belief by faith” in the Romish Church bestows the attribute of infallibility on a man, and “belief by faith” in the Protestant Church bestows the same attribute on a book.

“Belief by faith” in the Bible injunction, “Thou shalt not permit a witch to live,” has been instrumental in the persecution, torture and murder of (it is estimated) nine millions of human beings.

“Belief by faith” in the words, “I came not to bring peace, but a sword,” so stimulated fanaticism, in the days of the Crusades, that (it is estimated) twenty millions of lives were sacrificed.

“Belief by faith” in the teaching of the “gentle Jesus”—“They who will not that I shall rule over them, bring hither and slay before me”—has cost the world, probably, not less than fifty millions of human lives.

“Belief by faith” in the Bible text—“If any are sick, call for the elders, and let them pray over him”—has sacrificed many a life which medical treatment would doubtless have saved.

“Belief by faith” in the examples and teachings of the Bible sustained polygamy in Utah and slavery in the South, and has retarded the progress of temperance.

Through “belief by faith” in the astronomy of Moses the heliocentric system was rejected.

“Belief by faith” in biblical biology, repels the scientific fact of evolution.

Through “belief by faith” we have become heirs to the Puritan bigotry of the seventeenth century, as especially exemplified in our atrocious Sunday laws.

“Belief by faith” lit the fires of Seville, of Smithfield, of Geneva and of Salem, and “carried fagots to the feet of philosophy.”

“Belief by faith” induced the absurd utterance of Tertulian —“I believe *because* it is impossible”—and the equally absurd utterance of Rev. T. De Witt Talmage, D. D.—“I believe certain passages in the Bible *because* I cannot understand them.”

The injunction to “believe by faith,” had its origin in ignorance, and was nurtured by superstition and fear. It fosters injustice, arrogance and tyranny. It is responsible for more persecution, oppression, cruelty, sorrow and loss of human life, than any other single cause.

Nothing has so antagonized science, retarded civilization, discouraged learning, and repressed kindly feeling.

Faith is uninvestigating, unreasoning, benighting, terrorizing.

John Morley says: “Those who dwell in the tower of ancient faiths, look about them in one constant apprehension, misgiving and wonder; with the hurried, uneasy mien of people living upon earthquakes.”

“Faith has burned libraries, closed schools, anathematized science, martyred philosophers, stayed the progress of the human race, wrought incalculable evils to civilization.”—(Rev. R. Heber Newton.)

“The greatest curse to a nation, is a form of faith which prevents manly inquiry.”—(Inman.)

“The attainment of faith (*says the cleric*), not the ascertainment of truth, is the highest aim of life. . . . Every great advance in knowledge has involved the annihilation of the spirit of blind faith.”—(Huxley.)

“—faith, once wedded fast  
To some dear falsehood, hugs it to the last,”

—*Lalla Rookh*.

A thousand religions there are (according to the late Rev. Dr. Hitchcock), embracing all shades of differing faiths—and all equally ignorant. Each is the offspring of environment and education, and neither are capable of the slightest proof. The adherents of each are equally confident that theirs, alone, is the true faith.

“*All faiths are, to their own believers, just,*  
For none believe because they will, but must,  
By education most have been misled:  
*We so believe because we so are bred.*  
The priest continues what the nurse began,  
And thus the boy imposes on the man.”—*Dryden*.

“Religions are opinions; *prove but one*  
And all men mingle in a common faith.”

There is, however, a higher sense than in its reference to religion, in which the word faith may be used. A faith

“not pent within a book,  
Or buried in a creed,”

but in all that is good and grand and beautiful and useful in the illimitable universe; faith in truth, in principle, in integrity of character, in human affections, in noble deeds, in the inspired volume of nature, in the vitalizing forces which science is revealing to us in the ever-widening and ceaseless flow of intelligent thought.

“For modes of faith let pious zealots fight:  
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right.”—*Pope*.

“There lives more faith in honest doubt,  
. . . . than in half the creeds.”—*Tennyson*.

## RELIGION NOT MORALITY.

“Morality may exist independently of religious ideas.”—*Guizot.*

“Religion never yet has purified morality.”—*Rev. J. W. Chadwick.*

THE Christian Church has assumed to regard morality as that which has not existed and cannot exist outside of Christendom. It ignores the fact that long before the Christian era the principle of morality was held in as high esteem as it ever has been during the past nineteen centuries. It is needless to mention the illustrious names of philanthropists, philosophers, poets, and others of ancient times, whose standard of morality was as high as that of any later date. Call Homer, Lycurgus, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, immoral? What an insult to intelligence!

It (the Christian Church) impudently prates of “*Christian morality*”—as though the adherents of other religions (or of no religion) were utterly devoid of moral ideas and unused to moral practices.

The same code of morals exist among the people of every religion, and of those who repudiate what goes by the name of religion, as that which exists among Christians; and as to practice, the Christian Church can justly claim no advantage if, indeed, it cannot be shown that Christianity lags behind those who differ from it in that regard.

With reference to the code of morals of other religions, in substantiation of what I have asserted, I quote from orthodox, Christian authority. Rev. E. F. Burr, D. D., of Lyme, Ct., in his *Universal Belief*, says: “We find statements or implications of all the main elements of common morality in the Indian religion. . . . The Avesta of the Persians has like testimonies to the common principles of humanity. . . . The early Egyptian ethics strongly resembled the higher requirements of the Christian religion. . . . Confucius

taught the 'golden rule,' which is really the whole scheme of Christian morals in short hand. . . . There is scarcely a thing forbidden or commanded in the Bible which is not also forbidden or commanded in the Tripitaka. . . . We find substantially the same moral ideas prevailing among the Greeks and Romans. . . . In the Koran we find ourselves able to piece out a very large code of correct morals, one that follows very closely in the steps of Christianity itself."

Rev. Minot J. Savage says: "There are moral men in all religions and in no religion."

Rev. N. A. Staples says: "The great mass of the Christian precepts and principles had already been embodied in other writings."

"Ye'll get the best of moral books  
'Mang black Gentoos and Pagan Turks,  
Or hunters wild on Ponotaxi,  
Wha never heard of orthodoxy."—*Burns*.

Mrs. Annie Besant, Canon Taylor, Joseph Thompson (the African explorer,) DeHolde, Rev. Mr. Nevins (missionary to China,) Rev. Mr. Macolm (in his *Travels*,) all have shown that the morality existing among the Buddhists, the Mohamedans, the Chinese, the Burmese, and many others whose religions differ from that of Christianity, is fully equal, and in many respects, superior to that of Christianity.

In Mosheim's *Church History of the Fourth Century*, he speaks of the gross immoralities existing in the Christian Church, and adds that "to deceive and lie, when religion can be promoted by it, was a virtue."

Only a few years ago a Presbyterian minister, recently chancellor of the University of New York City, said: "I believe in deceit; I believe in deceit whenever you have a rightful enemy to destroy."

Lecky says of the Byzantine Empire, in which, for nearly eleven centuries, faith in Christianity abounded, that "the universal verdict of history is that it constitutes, without exception, the most thoroughly base and despicable form that civilization has yet assumed."

In Samuel Johnson's *Oriental Religions* we read: "The

gross immoralities of Europeans in India led to the use of the term Christian as a by-word."

The *Pall Mall Gazette* says: "The heathen are right to test Christianity, not by the words of English missionaries, but by the lives of English merchants."

Mrs. S. L. Baldwin (missionary of the Methodist Board to China,) petitioned Congress for permission to import a heathen to this country on the ground that "the private virtues of the heathen showed far stronger signs of thrift than our own."

Rev. E. D. Jones (for many years a missionary in China) says: "The moral condition of the Chinese is better at home than here."

Rev. Dr. Happer, for nearly forty years a missionary in China, while dining at my home, said that "in Canton (with about the same population as that of New York City) it is not usual to bar doors or fasten windows; and as to murders, more are committed in one week in New York than in one year in Canton."

Helen H. Gardener says: "In five years' experience with those gentle and faithful heathen from Japan, I have never been compelled to turn a key upon either food, jewels or money."

Canon Farrar says: "While the English have converted one Hindoo to Christianity they have made one hundred drunkards."

The *Christian at Work* says: "Where the English have converted one Chinaman to Christianity they have made two hundred addicted to the opium habit."

In Williams' *Middle Kingdom*, we read that the Pagan Emperor of China destroyed more than twenty thousand chests of opium rather than injure his subjects and fill his own pockets with its sale, while *Christian* England instituted the cruel wars of 1840 and 1857, which resulted in the theft of Hong Kong and the forcing of ten million pounds of opium annually upon *Heathen* China.

Captain Adams of the *Golden Fleece* remarks: "I saw less wickedness on the *Heathen* shores of China, India, Java and

Sumatra than on the *Christian* wharves of New York, Boston, London and Liverpool."

Mosheim has said that less morality existed among Christian than among other nations.

The *Britannica Encyclopedia* (article on Missions) says: "The Mohammedans are more upright and moral than the Christians. . . . It is notorious that fraud, violence, drunkenness and debaucheries are more numerous in Christian countries than in any other."

Bishop Payne (of the African Methodist Episcopal Church) writes: "Not more than one-third of the ministers—Baptist and Methodist—in the South are *morally* and intellectually qualified."

Rev. John W. Chadwick says: "As for crimes of business dishonesty and defalcation, has it not been a theme of almost universal comment that the wrong-doer has been, in the great majority of cases, men of influence and importance in the churches of the popular religion?"

Mr. Gladstone recently wrote: "To my great pain and disappointment I have found, during the last three years, that thousands of churchmen supplied the great mass of those who have gone lamentably wrong upon questions involving the interests of truth, justice and humanity.

Scarcely a day passes in which is not found a record of some immoral act committed by some clergyman or Sunday-school superintendent, or other professor of religion, thus conclusively proving that religion does not necessarily restrain immorality.

District Attorney Stanton, of Connecticut, four years ago, said: "Within the past ten years five millions of dollars have been lost in Connecticut by dishonest bank and other management; in *nearly every instance* by those who were prominent in church matters."

"Try every art of legal thieving;

No matter—stick to sound believing."—*Burns*.

No more outrageous violation of the eighth commandment can be found in the annals of history than the act of Christianity in *stealing* Girard College and appropriating an immense

legacy to the uses of a religion of which the munificent benefactor of learning expressed, in unmistakable terms, his utter abhorrence. The frivolous, absurd and false excuse that as the will had provided for instilling in the minds of the students "the purest principles of morality," and that these principles are nowhere to be found but in the Christian religion, is worthy only of a religion that has exemplified its dishonesty, its immorality, its cruelty, more than that of any other religion. As well might Mohammedanism appropriate to its own use, and for the same reason, the funds with which Mr. Christopher R. Robert and other Christians have endowed "Robert College" at Constantinople.

The coarseness, indecency and immorality of the book which is the Christian's authority and guide is enough to condemn it in the eyes of every virtuous, unprejudiced, person.

The *Freeman's Journal* of June 20th, 1891, gives a startling account of the immoral influence of the Bible in our public schools, especially in such as are attended by the youth of both sexes.

In the *New York Evangelist* of May 29th, 1890, is a letter from Rev. Dr. C. H. Parkhurst (minister of the Presbyterian Church on Madison Square, New York City), in which he says: "Noah built an ark and got into a beastly condition of intoxication. . . . Abraham had more wives than meets the requirements of modern law and polite society, saying nothing of his having lied so mischievously that the Egyptian government drove him out of the country. . . . Jacob was an archæological Brigham Young on an amateurish scale. . . . Joseph engineered a grain corner in Egypt of proportions so colossal as to put 'old Hutch' altogether in the shade. . . . David was a murderer and adulterer. . . . Solomon maintained a harem so magnificently supplied that, in contrast with him, any modern Turk sinks into the purist monogamist."

Are not our humane instincts outraged, and does not the cheek of innocence blush at the recital of how the troops of Moses were commanded by God (!) to make war upon their



unoffending neighbors, and to slay all the men and married women, but to take captive all the virgins !

The reader's patience would be wearied with a record of all the injustice, obscenity and immorality which is contained in what is termed the "Holy Bible."

The Mormons defend the practice of polygamy by Bible quotations. The intemperate find Bible texts to encourage their intemperance. The effect of Bible teachings in sustaining slavery is shown in what Frederick Douglas has said : "We have men-stealers for ministers, women-whippers for missionaries, and cradle-plunderers for members."

It is presumed that it was the teachings of the "Word of God" which induced the Rev. Mr. Martin to become a Romish priest, to be converted to Protestantism, to marry, to be reconverted to Romanism, and then to abandon his wife and children.

The Coreans have such respect for decency and virtue as to prohibit the landing of the Bible as an immoral book.

A writer in the *Arena*, October, 1890, says : "If the Bible was a translation of a sacred book of India, China or Egypt the whole Christian world would cry out against the publication of some of its passages."

Rev. George W. Buckley (author of "*Politics and Morals*") says, in allusion to certain questionable practices sanctioned by the Bible, "must not such a doctrine be pernicious to the morals of both old and young? Let us be rational enough and honest enough to condemn, without reservation, that which wounds the moral sentiment, however plainly declared by any book to be the word of God."

The dogmas of salvation, through belief by faith, without evidence ; of the atonement, of eleventh-hour repentance, of rewards and punishments—not for right or wrong living, but for right or wrong believing—of predestination, of original sin, of total depravity, of infallible men and infallible books, of a God of partiality, of a devil with enormous power, are not only absurd but more or less immoral.

Judge Westbrook, of Philadelphia, says : "The assurance

of eternal salvation, through simple faith in vicarious atonement (so called) must have an immoral tendency. . . . What is called the scheme of redemption violates every principle of justice. . . . He is the greatest enemy of pure religion and public morality who would substitute blind faith for rational knowledge. . . . In the Bible are maxims and examples which, if literally accepted and acted out as of divine authority, would spread moral mildew and red ruin in every direction."

Helen H. Gardener says: "The precepts of Jehovah are taught every week from the pulpit and carefully legislated against every winter in congress."

Rev. John W. Chadwick says: "Such theories as predestination and election have been, from first to last, fruitful sources of immorality. . . . There never was a doctrine broached that seemed so sure to breed moral pestilence as the doctrine of salvation by faith alone."

Says another: "Religion is impure and morality ignoble when recompense is the leading principle. . . . The theory of vicarious atonement destroys personal responsibility, the most essential element of moral character."

"It appears to me one of the most immoral dogmas ever advanced that a man *must* believe anything without evidence to prove it."—(B. Russel.)

"Virtue is far purer when practiced for its own sake than for a reward."—(Pompanatius.)

"The death of dogma is the birth of morality."—(Kant.)

The orthodox Christian Church gives dogma the first and morality the second place in the order of its teachings.

"The callous indifference to essential morality is mainly attributable to the large place given to the exposition of theology."—(Wilbur Larremore.)

"Religious morality has resolved itself almost entirely into a matter of rites and ceremonial observances."—(*Westminster Review*.)

Religion has no necessary connection whatever with morality. A person may be moral without being religious, and the

reverse is true that a person may be religious without being moral.

No more religious people live than the colored people of the South, and yet their religion does not stop their stealing chickens.

Henry the VIII. was a religious, but not a moral, man.

Froude, speaking of Labat, the pirate, tells of his saying his prayers just prior to his capturing a vessel.

The cashier of a Louisville bank, who went to Canada with \$70,000 of the bank's money, in March, 1890, took with him of his personal effects only his Bible and prayer-book.

In the *New York Tribune* of Feb. 13th, 1892, is an account of the capture of a burglar from whose pocket had dropped a prayer-book, on which was the name of the burglar.

A servant of the writer, whose religion would not permit her sewing a button on a garment on Sunday, would steal brandy any week day.

“The Italian brigand rises from his knees before the Madonna to plunge his stiletto into the heart of the belated traveler.”  
(Rev. R. Heber Newton.)

Rev. Minot J. Savage says: “Through a large part of human history the intensely religious ages have not been distinguished for social purity, truth telling, honesty or justice.”

Rev. James Freeman Clarke says: “Marcus Aurelius was a better man than half the apostles.”

Büchner says: “The most religious times and countries have produced the greatest number of crimes and sins against the laws of morality, and, indeed, as daily experience teaches, still produce them.”

Warren G. Benton, in *Popular Science Monthly*, Nov., 1891, says: “The ages most noted for religious enthusiasm . . . were notoriously immoral.”

John Morley speaks of the absurdity of “building sound ethics on the shifting sands and rotting foundations of theology.”

The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* says: “With increasing

intelligence morals steadily tend toward a non-theological basis."

D'Holbach says: "To discuss the true principles of morality, men have no need of theology, revelation, or of God."

The Bishop of Hereford, in a Bampton lecture, remarked: "The principles of morality are founded in our nature, independently of any system of religious belief."

Rev. William Haynes Ward, D. D., editor of the *Independent*, says: "Morals and religion are two different things. Morals do not depend on God. Morals would exist if there were no God."

There are many who believe not only that religion is not necessary to morality, but that it has been and is a positive hindrance to it.

It certainly must be admitted that incentive to right-doing is higher and nobler when not urged by the religious idea of hope of reward or fear of punishment.

George Eliot says: "I am influenced at the present time by far higher considerations and by a nobler idea of duty than I ever was when I held the Evangelical belief."

"Duty is the whole of morality."—(Rev. Mark Hopkins, D. D.)

"I never did a right thing or abstained from a wrong one from any consideration of reward or punishment."—(Harriet Martineau.)

"I ought, or I ought not, constitutes the whole of morality."—(Darwin.)

Christianity has of late years been more inclined to recognize the fact that people can be conscientious, upright, honorable, humane, loving and moral without accepting any of the creeds of the churches.

A few year since the Rev. Mr. Townsend, in a sermon at "All Angels Church," New York City, said: "There are men leading careful, irreproachable lives; men who are refined and highly intellectual; good husbands, good fathers, good brothers, valued and trusted throughout the communities, who reject Christianity."

## THE TRINITY.

PROBABLY very few Christians are aware that the doctrine of the Trinity is a very ancient one; that it existed long before the birth of Christianity; that it (like nearly all of the signs, rites, ceremonies, observances and dogmas of the Christian Church) is of Pagan origin. Centuries before the Trinity of "Father, Son and Holy Ghost" was promulgated, there were believers in the Trinity of "Brahma, Vishnu and Siva," of "Osiris, Isis and Horus," of "Indra, Varnu and Agni," of "Odin, Vili and Ve," of "Mithra, Oromasdes and Ariman," of "Buddah, Dharma and Sangha."

Rev. R. Heber Newton says: "The doctrine of the Trinity is an Eastern speculation; Christianity clothed itself in this ancient garb, betraying to him who knows the fabric of the East, the looms of Egypt and of India."

Rev. Lyman Abbott says: "Traces of belief in the Trinity are to be found in the most heathen nations. It is discernible in Persian, Egyptian, Roman, Japanese and most of the ancient Grecian mythologies, and is very marked in Hindooism."

The following quotation from an ancient Hindoo poet will show how closely the ancient and modern idea of the Trinity correspond:

"In those three persons the one God was shown,  
Each first in place, each last, not one alone;  
Of Siva, Vishnu, Brahma, each may be  
First, second, third, among the blessed three."

Rev. James Freeman Clarke speaks of the adoption by Christianity of "the Platonic and Egyptian Trinity."

Winwood Reade speaks of "the Trinity which the Egyp-

tians had invented and which Plato had idealized into a philosophical system."

Rev. Andrews Norton says: "We can trace the history of this doctrine (of the Trinity) and discover its source—*not in the Christian revelation*—but in the Platonic philosophy, . . . introduced into the Christian religion by the Fathers of the Church."

The doctrine of the Trinity, in its relation to Christianity, was *utterly unknown in the first century* of the Christian Era, and (says the late Rev. Henry W. Bellows, D. D.) was "*invented* by theologians in the second century."

The first use of the word Trinity, by Christians, that we find, is by Theophilus, in the later part of the second century.

Tertulian introduced the idea of the Trinity into theology about the year 200.

C. B. Waite says: "The doctrine of the Trinity was not a belief in the first two centuries."

Rev. John W. Chadwick says: "For more than two centuries after the death of Jesus it remained doubtful whether he was to be regarded as a human or a divine being."

Even so truly orthodox an authority as the Rev. Wm. G. T. Shedd, D. D., says: "The doctrine (of the Trinity) did not contain a technical construction in the first two centuries and a half."

John Fiske places the first announcement of the doctrine of the Trinity in 250 to 260.

Rev. Philip Schaff, D. D., says: "The doctrine of the divinity of Christ was but imperfectly developed in the anti-Nicene period."

Cardinal Manning says: "The creeds of that early day (in the first three centuries) make no mention in their letter of the doctrine (of the Trinity) at all. They make mention, indeed, of a three; but that they are co-equal—co-eternal, is not stated and *never could be gathered from them.*"

According to Mosheim the doctrine of the Trinity was in an undeveloped state in the third century, when several different opinions or theories were advanced regarding the doctrine.

The views held by Noetus Sabillius and Manes were somewhat in the nature of compromises between Arianism and Athanasianism.

According to Rev. Dr. Lyman Abbott, the doctrine of the Trinity (as enunciated by Athanasius) was not promulgated till the fourth century.

Petavius (R. C.) in his celebrated work on the Trinity (17th century) says : " Concerning the three persons of the divinity nothing was fully written or known before the Council of Nice"—325. At which Council three persons in godhead are declared a fundamental article of faith.

Rev. Andrews Norton says : " The doctrine of Athanasius concerning the Trinity was established by the Council of Nice. . . . The doctrine of the incarnation continued in an unsettled state till the fourth century." He also tells us that the subject of the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit was undetermined until the Council of Constantinople—383.

Professor Sparks says that the Deity of the Holy Spirit was not formally decreed till the Council of Constantinople.

The doctrine of the Trinity rests on the supposition that Christ was not the son of Joseph, and on the (absurd) assumption that he was *unnaturally* born (of a virgin).

But, " what saith the Scriptures?"

In Matthew i : 16, we read of " Joseph, the *husband* of Mary, of whom Jesus was born."

Luke iii : 23, speaks of " Jesus the *son of Joseph*."

In John i : 45, we read of " Jesus of Nazareth the *son of Joseph*."

If it be true, as Matthew says it is, that Joseph was Mary's (only) husband, it is not only unreasonable but highly *improper* to assume that Joseph was not the father of Jesus ; and if Luke and John's records be true, the question is settled that *Jesus was the son of Joseph*.

Rev. John W. Chadwick has very properly intimated that it is an insult to the memory of Mary and a stigma upon her chastity to deny that Joseph was the father of Jesus.

In further corroboration of this position, we read in Luke, chap. ii, that Jesus, having been absent from home for three days, his parents went in search of him and, having found him, Mary administered a rebuke to him for his absence, adding, "Thy *father* and I have sought thee sorrowing." Christ himself never claimed a miraculous birth.

Kersey Graves says : " We find the story of the immaculate conception resting entirely upon the slender foundation comprised in the legends of an angel and a dream. We are told that Mary got it by an angel and Joseph by a dream ; and through these sources we have the whole ground work of the story of the divinity of Christ."

It was usual to claim virgin births for founders of religions. Such claims were made for Zoroaster, Buddah, Chrisna, Quenxalcote, Hesus and many others, as well as for Pythagoras, Arion, Plato, Yu, Appolonius Tyanneus and others of prominence in ancient times.

The Christian "Scheme of Salvation" is supported by the *double* claim that Christ had no natural father and that he was (in the male line) of the lineage of David.

*Both cannot be true.*

The *Truth Seeker* says : " If Joseph was his (Jesus) father, the lack of divine parentage vitiates the whole Christian scheme. If the Holy Ghost was his father then he was not of the house of David, which again vitiates the scheme."

There seems the strongest possible evidence from the utterances and doings of those who knew Jesus best that the claim for his divinity is unsubstantiated.

In Matt. xxiii : 55, the significant enquiry is made, " Is not this (Jesus) the carpenter's son ? "

John (vii : 5) says : " For neither did his brethren (James, Joseph, Simon and Judas) believe on him."

Of his own disciples Thomas doubted him, Peter denied him and Judas betrayed him, and, finally, says Matthew (xxvi : 56), " *all* the disciples forsook him and fled."

If, in his own generation, his most intimate friends and his nearest of kin refused to believe on his being a third of the



Trinity, why should it be expected that nearly two thousand years thereafter those who knew of him only by tradition should so believe?

A few years since I had a conversation with a professor of theology in Princeton Seminary who I had heard preach a sermon, in which he insisted upon the truth of the dogma of Christ's virgin birth. I asked him how he reconciled this theological dogma with the record of the genealogy of Christ as found in Matthew and in Luke, in both of which accounts the genealogy is brought down from David *through Joseph* to Christ. His reply was that he did not know it (did not know that his genealogy came through Joseph). In other words he was ignorant of that upon which the whole fabric of his theology rested until I told him! That professor is now president of Princeton University.

The human (the humane) character of Jesus far transcends that upon which theologians insist upon in his (supposed) relation to Deity. As Winwood Reade has said, "He was a man of the people, a rustic and an artisan. . . . He was led to take the part of the poor. He sympathized deeply with the outcasts, the afflicted and oppressed. To children and to women, to all who suffered and shed tears, to all from whom men turned with loathing and contempt, to the girl of evil life, . . . to the sorrowful in spirit and the weak in heart, to the weary and heavy laden, Jesus appeared as a shining angel with words sweet as the honey-comb and bright as the golden day. He laid his hands on the head of the lowly and bade the sorrowful be of good cheer.

What a contrast is such a gentle being with that *merciless* existence—the *sole creation of theology*—which could say: "He that believeth not shall be damned," or "Depart from me into everlasting fire."

The importance to orthodox theology of the dogma of the Trinity is thus explained by Rev. O. B. Frothingham: "To deny the Trinity is to deny the deity of Christ; to deny the deity of Christ is to deny the sufficiency of his atonement; to deny the atonement is to deny the need of man; to deny the

need of man is to deny the necessity of grace, to *vacate the offices of the church and to reduce to nothing the significance of christendom.*”

The conception of the Trinity has differed greatly in different minds and in different ages. The creed of Athanasius says : “The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God, and yet there are not three gods, but one God.”

Gregory Nyssen, Cyril of Alexandria, and others regard the Trinity as composed of three individuals “as distinct as Peter, James and John.”

The orthodox theologians of the present day explain with perfect clearness (to their own minds) that there are “three persons in one God, but that these three persons are *not* three individual beings or separate existences, but three “essences” (or constituent substances) similar in nature, which similitude of nature and of essence constitutes the one God.

Rev. Lyman Abbott says : “Precisely what the doctrine of the Trinity is, or rather how it is to be explained, Trinitarians are not agreed among themselves.”

Rev. Andrews Norton says : “The ancient opinions concerning the Trinity (before the Council of Nice) were very different from the modern doctrine”—which, according to Cudworth, was established by the fourth general Lateran Council—1215.

Rev. R. Heber Newton says of the doctrine of the Trinity that “it should *not* be accepted in the form held by the conventional Christian, but in that which is held by the philosophic mind of to-day.”

It is a very significant fact that the text “There are three that bear record in heaven—the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one”—1 John v : 7 (and from which text millions of sermons, to prove by the Scriptures the truth of the doctrine of the Trinity, have been preached) is *omitted in the “revised edition.”*

The word “Trinity” occurs nowhere in the Bible.

Sacroboscus (R. C.) says : “The Arians were **not** condemned by the Scriptures but by tradition.”

Rev. James Freeman Clarke says : “ You will scarcely find a minister of the Church of England who will *admit* that he believes the Athanasian creed, and yet no *convention* of that body has ever been willing to surrender it. . . . We recently saw an account of a discussion in the House of Bishops of the Church of England on a proposition to discontinue the use of the Athanasian creed in the church service. The Archbishop of Canterbury gave as a reason for retaining it *that no one believed it and so it could do no harm.*”

Archbishop Tillotson said of the Athanasian creed that he wished the Church of England “ were well rid of it.”

Rev. Dr. South says : “ Men cannot persuade themselves that Omniscience, Omnipotence and Omnipresence should have been wrapt in swaddling clothes.”

Rev. Andrews Norton says : “ The creed attributed to Athanasius (a spurious work of some unknown writer) seems to have been formed in the delirium of folly, but is now the professed faith of a great portion of Protestants. . . . The Eternal Three ! The Deity an infant ! God bleeding and thereby appeasing heaven ! The monster legends of Hindoo superstition present nothing more revolting.”

Lord Bacon thus describes a Trinitarian’s belief : “ He believes a virgin to be the mother of a Son who is her maker. That He, whom heaven and earth could not contain was shut up in a narrow room. That He, who is from everlasting, was born in time. That He, who is the Almighty, was carried in arms. That He, who only had life and immortality, had died.”

Bacon further defines a Trinitarian to be one who believes “ three to be one and one to be three.”

Rev. Dr. Channing speaks of the “ bad arithmetic of the doctrine of the Trinity.”

L. K. Washburn says : “ Who believes in the Trinity must hate the multiplication table.”

Rev. J. M. Capes, of the Church of England, says : “ To

say that a being can be both three and one, at the same time, is simply a falsehood."

Rev. John W. Chadwick says: "The three—one God—but neither one of them the other."

The difficult feat of transcorporation, of three persons with one, is called by another writer, "Theological legerdemain."

What a grotesque description is that by Mr. Raymond S. Perrin of a painting of the Trinity by Pesello, 1442, in the National Gallery of London, "God is presented—wearing a hat somewhat resembling that of the Pope—in a sitting posture, holding in his hands the cross on which Jesus is nailed. The Holy Ghost, in the form of a dove, rests upon the bosom of the Father and watches the Son."

And now that the doctrine of eternal punishment has been condemned by the enlightened sentiment of the age; that the belief in a god of personality has given place to that of immanence or transcendent intelligence, or that God and nature are interchangeable terms; that heaven is no longer a place but a "condition;" that the devil is an evil influence and not a personal being; that the six days of creation have expanded into six periods of time; that the age of the world, instead of six thousand years, geology teaches, is nearer six millions of years; that the heliocentric has supplanted the geocentric system of astronomy; that chemistry has verified the eternal existence of matter; that Darwin and Haeckel are now more acceptable as teachers of biology than Moses; that the Biblical story of universal creation has become merged in the grand and scientific truth which the theory of evolution has unfolded and demonstrated; that the dogmas of original sin, total depravity, Predestination, Election, Partialism, Preteriton, of an inerrant book and of an infallible man, have adherents only among the most credulous; that belief in parthenogenesis and anthropomorphism is rejected by all who recognize the invariability of natural law and who make use of their thinking faculties; that the doctrines of the incarnation, atonement, resurrection and ascension are being repudiated by the more rational thought of the day; that the

traditions, legends, fables, myths, superstitions and miracles of the Bible are daily finding fewer believers ; now that all these and other false assumptions—the heritage of an ignorant past—are fast fading from view, may we not hope that the unreasonable, the absurd, the Pagan-born dogma of the Trinity will also be, soon (to quote Rev. W. H. H. Murray, D. D.) “relegated to the limbo into which are flung the (other) cast-off garments of vagabond theories.”

## CIVIL LIBERTY.

THE general impression is that civil liberty and religious liberty are (as it were), twin sisters, both animated by a common purpose and actuated by a desire to aid each other in securing and maintaining those equitable rights which are the natural heritage of all, without regard to differences of opinion on matters political, economical or religious. The twin sister representing religious liberty, however, has not had the same regard for the rights of *its* twin sister representing civil liberty as is supposed. While *civil* liberty recognizes the equal rights of all, irrespective of opinion, *religious* liberty (or its votaries), limits these rights to those who adopt the religion which religious people have "liberty" to profess and practice; in other words, the advocates of religious liberty deny civil liberty to all those who decline to accept any of the tolerated religions, claiming that such persons "have no rights which 'religious people' are bound to respect." Thus we have *religious* liberty, but *not civil* liberty.

Noah Webster defines "civil liberty" as "exemption from arbitrary interference with person, opinion or property on the part of the government under which one lives." Taking this as its true meaning, the question may be seriously and anxiously asked—have we civil liberty in this country?

Have we that civil liberty which claims exemption from "arbitrary interference" with our persons when we are compelled to "observe" (as religious fanaticism calls it) a certain day of the week and abstain from occupation, recreation or pleasure on that day?

Have we that civil liberty which demands exemption from arbitrary interference with our opinions when our children

in the public schools (supported by general tax) are given religious instruction which their parents regard as so much useless or baneful superstition? A further arbitrary interference with our opinions is shown where testimony of a witness is rejected because he refuses to believe in the inspiration of a certain book, or in a future state of punishment.

Have we that civil liberty which grants exemption from arbitrary interference with our property when we are compelled by law to contribute our money (thro' the tax levy) toward appropriations for sectarian institutions; for payment of chaplains in our prisons, in congress, in the army and navy; and to supplement the amount rendered necessary by reason of the exemption of church property from taxation? Surely not.

It would be quite as proper and as just had the opponents of Sunday observance the power, for them to enact a law fining and imprisoning people for preaching or praying on Sunday, as it is now to likewise punish for working or playing on that day. The arrest and imprisonment of citizens who (though thoroughly religious and many of them Christians) do not believe in Sunday observance is as arbitrary and tyrannical as any act that history records. Three Baptists (who observe religiously the seventh day of the week) have been for months languishing in a prison in Tennessee for the crime (!) of attending to their gardens or performing some ordinary farm duties on Sunday. Think of this in this land which boasts of civil liberty!

There is no greater denial of civil liberty than the exclusion from the world's fair of millions of our citizens on the only day of the week they can visit it, because (forsooth) certain religious fanatics regard it as a sacred day.

The danger to civil liberty in the matter of religious teaching in our public schools is recognized even by the clergy. The late Rev. Howard Crosby, D. D., said: "There is no safety for our country but in non-sectarian (elementary) education."

The sentiment of all intelligent, reflecting and just persons

is that of a firm opposition to contributing, either directly or indirectly, by the State, in support of any religious institutions. The system of exempting church property from taxation is an indirect method of appropriating money for the support of places of worship. Many of the clergy who believe in civil liberty as a *principle* boldly denounce this exemption. Rev. Dr. Shipman of Christ Church, New York city, says : " That which is protected by government may justly be compelled to maintain it. I would like to see all church property throughout the land taxed to the last dollar's worth. The Church may fight this question, but sooner or later, the battle will go against it, and its retreat will not be only with dented armor but with banners soiled."

Judge Story, of the U. S. Supreme Court, says (in the Gerard will case) : " The Constitution of 1790 and the like permission will, in substance, be found in the Constitution of 1776, and the existing Constitution of 1838 expressly declares that no man can of right be compelled to attend, erect or *support* any place of worship, or to maintain any ministry against his consent. . . . It must have been intended to extend equally to all sects, whether they believe in Christianity or not and whether they are Jews or Infidels."

To the honor of those branches of the Christian Church known as Baptists and Methodists, be it known, that they have declined to accept the money appropriated by the general government for religious instruction among the Indians, on the ground that the government has no business whatever to make such appropriations.

Sunday laws, appointments of religious and fast days, and of chaplains ; the requirements of oaths and religious teachings in our public schools ; sectarian appropriations of money and exemption of church property from taxation—all are clearly interferences with that civil liberty which grants equal privileges and imparts equal justice to all—to the religious and to those who make no profession of religion.

The Constitution of the United States says : " Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion,"



and yet, in the face of this section and in utter disregard of it, there is a virtual *establishment of the Christian religion*, as is shown (for instance) by its recognition in the religious services had at the opening of each day's session of Congress.

The Constitution also says: "No religious test shall be required as a qualification to any office, and yet no person will be permitted to fill certain offices, unless they take a prescribed oath *as a test of belief in a particular religion*."

The State of New York (among other States) has a law positively prohibiting appropriations of any money for sectarian purposes, and yet such appropriations are annually made in addition to indirect contributions for the support of churches by exempting church property from the operation of a uniform tax law.

What a mockery to claim that we have civil liberty in this country! Christianity, by its intolerant spirit and its impudent assumption of superior knowledge and superior goodness, has robbed us of this boon.

When I speak of Christianity and of Christians, I make an exception in favor of many unpretentious, tolerant, liberal-minded and justice-loving believers in that faith. From such come honorable protests against invasions of civil liberty.

Rev. I. L. Wilkinson, D. D. (Baptist) says: "Ours is a civil government, strictly and exclusively; its jurisdiction extends only over civil affairs. A Christian government implies a State religion. Religious liberty does not mean liberty for the Christian religion alone."

Bishop Venner says: "The mixing up of politics with religion under any circumstances, is fraught with manifold and multiform dangers. There is no tyranny so cruel, no yoke so intolerable, as priestcraft when vested with temporal authority. More political atrocities, butcheries, crimes and enormities have been committed in the name and on account of religion than have arisen from any and *all* other causes combined."

Advocates of civil liberty in all ages and in all lands have uttered their protests against the domination of the Church.

Christ's injunction—"Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's"—is a precept which the Christian Church daily repudiates.

Edward I. of England caused taxes to be levied on the clergy on the (true) principle that those who are protected by the State should share its burdens.

J. L. M. Curry, in Johnson's Encyclopedia (article "Religious Liberty") says: "Unfortunately, Constantine, in 313, established Christianity by law, and since that time Christians, when they have obtained power, have allied their religion with civil authorities."

The *Jewish Times*, in a recent article on sectarian enactments (such as Sunday, oath and blasphemy laws) and of the religious intolerance and fanaticism which has injected them into our politics, says: "There is not one of these enactments that may not on any day be invoked against citizens who do not profess the Christian religion. The Adventists, Jews, Agnostics and the great body of rationalists at large have *not* the equal rights guaranteed by the Constitution that Christians have."

John Stuart Mill says: "Mankind could be no more justified in silencing the honest opinion of one person than that one person would, had he the power, be justified in silencing the opinion of mankind." And yet, here in this country, where civil liberty is supposed to abound more extensively than in any other, there are *millions* of people whose opinions are silenced by the noisy, dogmatic, bigoted persecuting upholders of the Christian Church.

Civil liberty exists in this country to a *very limited* degree and it will so continue as long as this domineering, tyrannical and unjust Christian Church is permitted to rob us of our civil rights.

The late Rev. Henry J. VanDyke, D. D. (Presbyterian) had the courage to say: "If we cannot have liberty *and* orthodoxy, *let orthodoxy go.*" And so let us say that if we cannot have religion *and* liberty let religion go. If religious liberty endangers civil liberty let religious liberty go *by all means*,

for we can easily dispense with the latter, but will be remanded to dark and barbarous ages if civil liberty be denied us.

Mrs. M. A. Freeman, Cor. Sec. American Secular Union, writes : " The people have permitted various privileges to the Church. It has become arrogant with the granting of them and follows but the course of bigotry in all ages. It is not satisfied with the various priestly perquisites it enjoys, but, throwing aside all disguise, demands for its divinities the nation itself."

The granting of religious liberty, at the expense of civil liberty, in the days of Thomas Paine, had this effect (says Col. Ingersoll) : " All kinds of Christians had the right—and it was their duty—to brand, imprison and kill infidels of every kind."

There has been no greater enemy of civil liberty than the Christian Church, from the fourth century (when it became ascendant) even to the present time, during which period it has caused the shedding of rivers of human blood, in its hatred of and conflict with, civil liberty.

We boast of civil liberty in this country, seeming to forget that we are denied *every* civil right except such as the Church permits.

How long is this condition of things to last? Will the Church grow wise enough, in the near future, to recognize our rights and cease its opposition thereto, or will the time come when the lovers of civil liberty will demand the possession of those rights, *at whatever cost?* for the spirit of the age *insists* that we have true, pure, unmingled civil liberty.

## MIRACLES.

“It is more probable that testimony should be mistaken than that miracles should be true.”—*Hume*.

“It is a waste of time to regard any miraculous reports as even possibly true.”—*Rev. J. M. Capes*.

THE importance of the subject of miracles is apparent when the fact exists that it is by miracles, and by miracles *alone*, that orthodox Christianity is supported. Think of a religion that is sustained *only* by belief in violations of the laws of Nature ; which laws every scientist of note the world over declare, are immutable ! The whole immense fabric of Christianity is built upon miraculous records, such as the story of creation, of the fall of man, of the deluge, of Jonah, Joshua, Baalam, Daniel, the three men in the fiery furnace, of the raising of Lazarus, the turning of water into wine, the feeding of the multitude, the virgin birth, resurrection and ascension of Christ. These and other violations of natural law are the props by which Christianity is maintained and without which it would speedily totter to its fall.

We may then well ask for the *evidence* of this sustaining power. Where is it to be found ? Is there one single instance in which there is the slightest reliable evidence of the performance of a solitary miracle ? Is there a particle of testimony such as would be entertained, for even a second, in any court of justice, throughout the civilized world ?

Besides, as Rev. Howard McQueary has said : “ An *extraordinary* event should be proved by an *extraordinary* amount of evidence.”

Rev. W. S. Crowe says of the miracles attributed to Christ : “ We have only the testimony of *partisans*. In no unbiased

secular record is there a word of corroboration. Of the partisans themselves we have not the testimony of a single *eye witness*. We have not one authentic word *from the generation to which Jesus belonged*. \* \* \* The Christian churches were founded and were flourishing throughout Palestine and the whole Roman Empire before anyone seemed to think of putting the *miracle foundation* under them. \* \* \* The miracles, if facts, would ruin all claims to benevolence in the founder of Christianity. The man who has power to heal every disease and to raise the dead, by a touch or a word, and who, in the course of his entire life only exercises that power in a few isolated instances, is worthy rather of the execration than the gratitude of mankind." *now here!*

The late Rev. Albert Barnes (Presbyterian, of Philadelphia) says: "An important question is whether there is any stronger evidence in favor of miracles than there is in favor of witchcraft, sorcery, reappearance of the dead, ghosts or apparitions; and if so, *in what respect* is the evidence in favor of the miracles of the Bible stronger than that which can be adduced in favor of witchcraft and sorcery? Has not the evidence in favor of these latter been derived from as competent and reliable witnesses as that in favor of miracles? Has not the evidence in favor of witchcraft and sorcery had, what the evidence in favor of miracles has *not* had, the advantage of a strict *judicial* investigation? Have not the most eminent judges, in the most civilized and enlightened courts of Europe and America, admitted the force of such evidence (in favor of witchcraft and sorcery,) and on the ground of it committed great numbers of innocent persons to the gallows and to the stake?"

Judge Richard B. Westbrook, of Philadelphia, says: "The miracles claimed for the New Testament failed to convince the people, among whom they are said to have been wrought, of the divine mission of Jesus and his apostles, as shown by the treatment they received. \* \* \* Miracles, sorcery and witchcraft were always based on the delusions of ignorance and superstition."

“Miracles resolve themselves into the question whether it is more probable that the laws of Nature, hitherto so immutably harmonious, should have undergone violation ; or that a man should have told a lie. We have *many* instances of men telling lies, *none* of an infraction of natural laws.” (Shelley.)

“I have known theologians, occupying the highest positions in the Church, who frankly admitted *among their own intimate friends*, that physical miracles were impossible.” (Max Muller.)

“Doubt of miracle is faith in the eternal order of Nature.” (Lewis G. Janes.)

“Miracle is the negative of law.”—(J. W. Chadwick.)

“When miracles are admitted, every scientific explanation is out of the question.”—(Kepler.)

“To exclude from history every event of a miraculous character is an absolute rule of criticism.”—(Renan.)

“The world has trusted in the doctrine of miracle-mongers till skepticism became a condition of self-preservation.” (Felix S. Oswald.)

“Miracles exist only for him who has not studied them.” (Système de la Nature.)

“Science demands the radical extirpation of caprice and the absolute reliance upon law in Nature.”—(Tyndall.)

Hon. Andrew D. White expresses his disbelief in miracles in speaking of “that vast power which works in the universe in all things by *law* and in none by *caprice*.”

As illustrating how insincere were some of the church fathers, in their pretended belief in miracles and in practising imposition on the ignorant, we quote from St. Chrysostom’s writings (fourth century :) “Miracles are proper only to excite sluggish and vulgar minds ; men of sense have no occasion for them.”

“In our own time one of the most eminent and gifted of the prelates of the Romish Church, has expressed more or less distrust regarding miracles. The late Cardinal John Henry Newman said : “It is doubtless the tendency of religious

minds to *imagine* mysteries and wonders where there are none.  
 \* \* \* The imagination is a fruitful cause of *apparent* miracles.  
 \* \* \* There have been at all times true miracles and false miracles.  
 \* \* \* No *authoritative guide* is supplied to us for drawing the line between the two."

In *Supernatural Religion*, vol. ii, p. 478, we read: "Even if the reality of miracles could be substantiated, their value, as evidence for the divine revelation, is destroyed by the necessary admission that miracles are not limited to one source, but that there are miracles satanic, which are to be disbelieved, as well as divine."

In Matthew xxiv : 24, it says: "There shall arise *false* prophets, who shall show great signs and wonders." If signs and wonders—miracles—are a test of true divinity, why are not these so-called "false prophets" divine?

In Mark viii : 12, Christ is made to say: "There shall be no sign given unto this generation." And yet it is by signs and miracles that the Christian Church claims the divine character of Jesus.

It is a matter of history that the age of the Apostles was one in which the most miraculous stories gained credence, and where "little if any radical distinction was drawn between a miracle and an ordinary occurrence."—(John Fiske.)

The miracles upon which the Christian religion mainly relies for its support are those of the virgin birth, resurrection and ascension of Christ. The first of these (claimed also for every other founder of a religion,) is of course so utterly opposed to natural law that no person who is familiar with such law, and who *thinks*, will for one moment entertain the thought of its being possibly true. As to the resurrection, it is quite safe to say that not a particle of reliable evidence has ever been produced in support of such claim. Rev. R. Heber Newton says: "Most thoughtful men recognize that any such resurrection of the body (as is largely believed in) demands a miracle of such magnitude as is *utterly unbelievable* by the average man." As to the ascension, to where did Jesus ascend? If you point your finger upwards at twelve meridian, it points in

one direction ; keep it thus pointed till twelve midnight, and it points in exactly an opposite direction. There is no "up" or "down" —no ascension or descension—where the law of gravity holds sway, in this universe of circling spheres ; no place whatever, in all probability, to which Enoch, or Elijah, or Jesus could, by any possibility, have been translated.

T. W. Doane, in his immensely valuable work called *Bible Myths*, shows an almost complete parallel between the miracles of Christ and those of Chrishna and Buddha ; healing the sick, restoring the maimed, the deaf and the blind, raising the dead and other miracles attributed to Christ, are all to be found in the histories of those two incarnations of Deity who flourished respectively 1,200 and 600 years B. C.

Miracles similar to those which Christ is said to have performed, were claimed for Zoroaster, Bochia, Horus, Serapis, Mardeck, Esculapius, Appolonius of Tyana, Simon Magus, Menander, Vespasian and others.

"The Gospel miracles are set in the midst of a series of similar wonders which commenced many centuries before the dawn of Christianity."—(*Supernatural Religion*.)

Hon. Andrew D. White says that "in the sixteenth century such miracles as healing the sick, the miraculous draft of fishes, raising the dead and the resurrection, were attributed to Francis Xavier."

The Romish Church claims that miracles are still being performed, but the Protestant Church says "the days of miracles are past." The former is certainly the most consistent, for it is more reasonable to suppose that IF miracles were ever performed they are quite as likely to be performed to-day as at any time in the past. The miracles that it is claimed are being performed now are quite as well authenticated as the miracles in which Protestants believe.

Professor Baden Powell illustrates the position of the Protestant Church in saying : "At the present day, it is not a miracle, but the *narrative* of a miracle to which faith is accorded."

It must be admitted, however, that the Roman Church de-



rives a splendid income by reason of the position it takes on this question. Enormous sums of money are constantly being raised out of the superstitious, in all parts of the Catholic world, by pretended miracles, performed by so-called holy relics. In May, 1892, the miracle claimed to have been performed by a supposed bone of St. Ann, in New York city, yielded the handsome profit of \$1,000 per day for sixteen days, in one church alone. Very properly did the distinguished member of the New York bar, John D. Townsend, Esq., recently ask the question, in a letter to the *New York Herald*, that if Madame Dis Debar was justly punished for obtaining money on the false pretense that the pictures with which she supplied the art gallery of Mr. Marsh were painted by the spirits of the "old masters," why should not like punishment be meted out to such priests as obtain money, from the ignorant, credulous and superstitious, on *equally* false pretenses?

Both Catholics and Protestants, however, profess belief in the miracles recorded in the Bible. Take, for example, the one recorded in Matthew xxvii: 51-53: "The earth did quake, and the rocks were rent, and the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of their graves and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Just analyze this record for a moment—calmly consider it—and you cannot help saying that such a statement is absolutely impossible of belief. Imagine, if you can, the surprise of the people living in the "holy city" having visits, "all of a sudden," from the "many bodies of the saints," the recent tenants of the grave! We are not informed as to what welcome the bodies of the saints received, how long their visits were continued, or to where they went on leaving. No wonder that intelligent people are refusing to believe such impossible recitals. No wonder that (even) Christian clergymen are daily repudiating belief in such incredible records, and forcing from them such declarations as that from the Rev. J. H. Rylance, viz: "All notions of the miraculous character of the Bible has been almost wholly banished from us."

In *Supernatural Religion* it is stated that "the great majority of modern German Biblical critics reject the miraculous *altogether*. \* \* \* As a historical fact there is nothing more certain than that miracles, and the belief in them, disappeared exactly when education and knowledge of the operations of natural laws became diffused throughout Europe."

Dr. Oort says: "Our increased knowledge of Nature has gradually undermined the belief in the possibility of miracles, and the time is not far distant when, in the mind of every man of culture, all accounts of miracles will be banished to their proper region—that of legend."

But why try to penetrate the supernatural (if such there be?) Is there not enough in the natural to excite our wonder? What more marvelous, or seemingly marvelous, than Nature herself? Why indulge in the recital of impossible stories of the (supposed) preter-natural, when the story of Nature is so inconceivably greater and grander? Talk of the inexplicability of miracles, which are but pretended violations of the laws of Nature; when the laws of Nature themselves are far more inexplicable. The revelations of the telescope and the microscope are infinitely more wonderful than all the miraculous revelations claimed for the Bible. The knowledge of the material world, imparted by Kepler, Newton, Humboldt and Darwin, far transcends in importance (as well as in truth,) all the (pretended) knowledge of the *im*-material world, supposed to be miraculously revealed by prophets, apostles, evangelists and church "fathers." There is far more of inspiration in the *one* "book of nature" than in *all* the books of the Old and New Testament. The miraculous accounts by Moses, introducing us to the geology, astronomy and biology of six thousand years ago, are completely superseded by the more modern and more truthful teachings of science. The story of evolution is far more ennobling (in addition to its having become an established fact) than that of a miraculous creation. The marvel of birth, physical growth and intellectual development, towers grandly above the juggling tricks which are known as miracles. All these teachings of the Bible inculcate belief in

useless fables, myths and miracles instead of in helpful facts, truths and natural causes. Miracles, and belief in them are utterly out of place in this age of scientific investigation and of the knowledge of cause and effect.

“When I consider that without a miracle the stars swing in their circles, that without a miracle seed-time and harvest keep their punctual round, that without a miracle the immanent life climbed from the fiery mist of worlds unmade to all their myriad shapeliness and interacting harmony, to mineral and vegetable and animal life, and from the wallowing saurain to the man or woman whom you love—when I consider all these things, I must confess it seems to me a little less than blasphemous to suggest that the power which is equal to them all is not equal to the development of humanity from any possible depth to any possible height, by methods as serene as those which keep the stars from wandering, or convert the substance of the planet into human smiles and tears.”—(Rev. John W. Chadwick.)

## SUNDAY.

PROBABLY very few Christians are aware of the fact that what they call the "Christian Sabbath" is (like almost everything pertaining to Christianity) of Pagan origin.

The first observance of Sunday that history records is in the fourth century, when Constantine issued an edict (*not* requiring its *religious* observance, but simply *abstinence from work*) reading, "Let all the judges and people of the town *rest* and all the various trades be suspended on the *venerable day of the Sun.*" At the time of the issue of this edict, Constantine was a Sun-worshipper; therefore it could have had no relation whatever to Christianity.

Dean Stanley says: "Our present legal institution of Sunday was appointed by Constantine's authority, but not as a *Christian Sabbath.*"

Rev. A. H. Lewis, D. D., says: "Constantine was a well-known devotee of the Sun-God, as were his predecessors. His attitude towards Christianity was that of a shrewd politician. Towards his rivals that of an unscrupulous, bloody-handed monarch. He gained power by intrigue, deceit and murder. No accurate historian dares call him a Christian emperor. He refused to unite with the Church until on his death-bed," (337).

Rev. Philip Schaff, D. D., says: "In the celebration of Sunday, as it was introduced by Constantine (and still continues on the whole continent of Europe), the cultus of the old Sun-God Apollo mingles with the remembrance of the resurrection of Christ."

At the Church Council in 538 the religious observance of Sunday was recommended, but very little attention was paid to it.

In 780 Alcuin, an English prelate, became the spiritual adviser of Charlemagne, when, for the first time, it was formally declared that the fourth commandment covered the first day of the week ; but this declaration was observed by comparatively few ; and for eight centuries thereafter Sunday was observed far more as a day of sport and festivity than as a religious one. The English parliament sat on Sundays and English courts were held on that day, down to the reign of Elizabeth.

In 1595, Dr. Nicholas Bound, of Suffolk County, England, published a work called "The True Doctrine of the Sabbath," in which he maintained, not that Sunday was divinely appointed as a Sabbath, but that the obligation to observe a Sabbath was divine. This idea seemed to take root and to grow rapidly, preparing the way for the rigid observance of Sunday as a Sabbath by the Puritans. To quote a Christian writer : "At the opening of the seventeenth century, the Puritans in England began the unscriptural and deceptive practice of calling Sunday the Sabbath."

W. H. Burr says : "The Christian Sabbath was instituted, not in Judea, but in Great Britain ; not in the first, but in the seventeenth century ; not by Christ or his apostles, but by the Puritans."

Another writer says : "The story of the establishment and reign of the Puritan Sabbath—whose decrepit form is still supported by State laws—constitutes one of the most disgraceful chapters in the history of ecclesiastical despotism."

Rev. M. J. Savage says : "The Puritan Sabbath was an outright creation of something which never existed in the world before."

The gloom and absurdity of a Puritanical Sabbath is well illustrated by Macaulay : "The Puritans opposed bear-baiting on Sunday, not because it gave pain to the bears, but because it gave pleasure to the people."

As showing that the inheritance of Puritanism, by its ignorance and bigotry, does violence to the kindly feelings of our nature, even to-day, we quote from a recent issue of the

*Toronto World*: "You might as well commit murder, as violate the fourth command; *of the two evils murder is the least.*"

Why will not Christian people investigate and find out for themselves (which they easily can), that the keeping of Sunday as a "holy Sabbath day," is wholly *without warrant*.

I challenge any priest or minister of the Christian religion, to show me the *slightest* authority for the religious observance of Sunday. And, if such cannot be shown by them, why is it that they are constantly preaching about Sunday as a *holy day*? Are they not open to the suspicion of *imposing* upon the confidence and credulity of their hearers? Surely they are deliberately and *knowingly* practicing deception upon those who look to them for candor and for truth, *unless* they can give satisfactory reasons for teaching that Sunday *is* a sacred day. There never was, and is not now, any such "satisfactory reasons." No student of the Bible has ever brought to light a single verse, line or word, which can, by any possibility, be construed into a warrant for the religious observance of Sunday. Quotations from the writings of the "Church Fathers," and others familiar with Church history, support this statement, and include the names of Tertulian, Eusebius, Ireneus, Victorinus, Theodoretus, Origen, Chrysostom, Jerome, Luther, Melancthon, Zwingle, Knox, Tyndale, Grotius, Neander, Mosheim, Heylyn, Frith, Milton, Priestley, Domville. John Calvin had so little respect for the day that he could be found playing bowls most any Sunday.

The claim that Sunday takes the place of Saturday, and that because the Jews were supposed to be commanded to keep the *seventh* day of the week holy, *therefore* that the *first* day of the week should be so kept by Christians, is so utterly absurd as to be hardly worth considering.

"The only authority for observing Sunday as a Sabbath, is the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church."—(*Brooklyn Examiner*, R. C.)

"All the great exegetes deny that the fourth commandment covers the Lord's Day."—(Rev. E. H. Johnson.)

“The Sunday law has neither scriptural authority nor standing room in the law of God.”—(Rev. A. H. Lewis, D. D.)

“Sunday, as a holy day, was unknown to the early Christians.”—(Judge Reed, Supreme Court, Pennsylvania.)

“To call any day of the week a Christian Sabbath is not Christian, but Jewish. Give us one scripture for it, and I will give you two against it.”—(William Penn.)

“The new doctrine (that the prescriptions of the fourth commandment have been transferred to the first day of the week) was for a long time strenuously opposed by the leading divines of the English Church, but warmly contended for by the Puritans.”—(Bannerman.)

In 1848 an anti-Sabbath convention was held in Boston to protest against the popular delusion of a Puritan Sabbath, and which convention was earnestly supported by William Lloyd Garrison, Theodore Parker, Charles K. Whipple, Charles E. Pratt and William C. Gannett.

“The commandment distinctly specifies the *seventh* day of the week (Saturday), and not the *first* (Sunday), as the Sabbath; and it is wholly by tradition, by extra scriptural authority, that Sunday has been so designated instead of Saturday.”—(*Catholic Review*.)

“Sunday is no Christian institution.”—(B. F. Underwood.)

“Christians carried on their work on Sunday, the same as on any other day, down to the time of Constantine.”—(President Andrews, of Brown University.)

“In the first place, the fourth commandment refers to the seventh day; in the second place, it was never binding upon anybody but the Jews; in the third place, the Decalogue was abolished by Christ.”—(Rev. B. B. Taylor.)

“The Sabbath of the commandment is the *seventh* day of the week, *not* the *first*.”—(Prof. Smith, of Andover.)

“Thousands of sincere Christians know that calling Sunday the ‘Holy Sabbath’ has no warrant whatever from Christ or his Apostles.”—(*Christian Standard*, of Cincinnati.)

“Their (the Puritans) warrant for what they did (with reference to the observance of Sunday as a Sabbath), whether

we look for it in the pages of the New Testament, or in the traditions of Catholic Christendom, was neither substantial nor sufficient. . . . He has not suddenly become a Godless and profane person, because he differs from others about Sunday, or because he holds that there are inherited views as to the observance of that day, *which cannot by any process of ingenuity be read into the pages of the New Testament, nor into any canon by which Christendom is bound.*—(Bishop Potter.)

It has been claimed by some Christians that Sunday should be kept holy because Christ was said to have arisen on that day. This cannot be true, for if Christ died on Friday, and if he rose on Sunday, it was not in accordance with the usually accepted Christian belief that he “rose on the third day,” for there would be but *two* days from Friday to Sunday. Besides, if “the Gospel according to Matthew” is to be believed, he must have risen on (not later than) Saturday, for in Matthew xxviii. it distinctly states that it was “at the end of the Sabbath” (Saturday) that the sepulchre was found to be vacant.

It is also claimed that the Apostles met on Sundays for religious exercises. So they did on other days of the week. “Religious worship was more fully attended to on Wednesday and Friday than on Sunday.”—(Rev. Dr. Lewis.)

“Not long after Justin Martyr’s time, we are sure the Christians observed the custom of meeting solemnly for divine worship on Wednesday and Friday.”—(Joseph Bingham.)

Rev. E. Nesbitt, D. D., of Santa Barbara, says: “In *only one* instance is an Apostle said to have met with any company of persons on the first day of the week, viz. : Acts xx : 7.” And in that it appears to give as a reason, that Paul was to depart on the next day. That Paul habitually observed and preached on the *seventh* day of the week, is shown in Acts xviii : 4,—“And he reasoned in the synagogue *every Sabbath*” (Saturday).

It is certainly not from Paul that these Sabbatarians get their persistence and intolerance, for, in his Epistle to the



Romans, xiv : 9, he says : "One man esteemeth one day above another ; another esteemeth every day alike ; let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

Again, in Cor. ii : 16, "Let no man judge you . . . of the Sabbath day."

It is claimed that the interests of order and morality are promoted by Sabbath laws : the very reverse is the case. All places where rational and innocent amusement can be had being closed, people are tempted to indulge in such entertainments as the saloon and kindred places afford.

The late Rev. Dr. Guthrie, of Edinburgh said : "We counted on one occasion, in Paris, thirty-three theatres and other places of amusement, open on Sunday ; *but*, in *one hour*, we saw in *London* and *Edinburgh*, with all their churches and schools and piety, more drunkenness than we saw in *five long months* in 'guilty' Paris."

Rev. Norman McLeod (another Scotch clergyman) speaks of the strict enforcement of Sabbatarianism as the "multiplication of practical inconsistencies, dishonesties and Pharisaical sophistries."

William C. Gannett says : "At the Scotch Synod in 1867, the Puritan Sabbath was openly proclaimed a failure ; one speaker saying that Continental Sabbaths produced no parallel to the disgraceful behavior which marked the day in Scotland."

The narrow-minded bigotry which would close our Art museums and seeks to close our World's Fair on Sunday, because a comparatively few of our people have inherited the false idea that Sunday is a sacred day ; thus denying to the large majority of our people what is far more sacred than *any day*, their rights as citizens, ought not to be longer tolerated.

The clergy are now expressing themselves boldly and frankly on this matter, and it is earnestly to be hoped that the day is near when the sacred right of doing that, on Sunday or any other day, which the individual conscience of each approves, will not be denied.

Such conspicuous representatives of the Christian Church as Bishops Potter, Tuttle and Simpson, Cardinal Gibbons and others, have taken steps in the right direction in this matter, and it is to be hoped that the tide of righteous indignation against those who would restrain us from such enjoyments as tend to elevate the race, will so rise as to overwhelm the present representatives of mediæval times.

Bishop Potter says : " We shall get a good Sunday in America when men learn to recognize its meaning and its uses ; not when we have closed all the doors which, if open, might help to teach the lesson of using the world as not abusing it. It would seem as if the door of a library were one of those doors, the door of a well-arranged and well-equipped museum another, the door of a really worthy picture-gallery another. If there be those who would seek the precincts of the exhibition at Chicago to look, it may be, more closely at the handiwork of man, to study the progress of the race in the story of its artistic and individual and mechanical achievement, that certainly can be no unworthy use of some hours of our American rest day."

Principal Cunningham, of Edinburgh, says : " It is a sin to keep the museums and art galleries closed on Sundays. . . . Farmers are foolish not to take advantage of a fine day to take in their crops."

Cardinal Gibbons says : " I entirely agree with Dr. Weld, Pastor of the First Independent Christ Church, in deprecating the closing of our art galleries, libraries, etc., on Sunday."

Archdeacon Blunt says : " The movement for Sunday observance ought to be opposed as unsound and unwise. . . . I have no wish to go back to the old Puritan Sunday, with its gloomy austerity, its rigid formalism, its bigoted uncharitableness, its oppressive savor of Sabbatarianism."

Some one has (truly) said : " To forbid work or play on Sunday is as much a tyranny as it would be to forbid worship."

The " National Religious Liberty Association " have issued this ringing protest against the closing of the World's Fair on Sunday : " Let us protest against these religio-political move-

ments. Protest in the name of seventh-day observers, not because their faith be true or false, but because of their right to liberty, the heaven-born heritage of every man. Protest in the name of America and an hundred years of unparalleled constitutional freedom. Protest in the name of every citizen of the United States, be he Infidel or Jew, Protestant or Catholic, whose right it is to worship or not to worship as he wills. Protest in the name of the down-trodden millions of Russia, who trust in the example of America to break their galling chains. Protest in the name of earth's millions of every age, who have sacrificed their lives on the altar of conscience and free thought. And lastly protest in the name of Christianity, pure and unspotted, from a State's pollution."

The sentiment among those in control of the World's Fair at Chicago, is very largely in favor of Sunday opening; and as indicating the wishes of the Board of Managers of the Chicago Fair for the State of New York, it may be mentioned that twelve out of the thirteen members of said Board have protested against the action of Congress in voting to shut the Fair on Sunday.

Ex-Congressman Butterworth, of Ohio, estimates the proportion of those desiring to close the World's Fair on Sunday at not over *five* per cent. of our population (which is undoubtedly a fair estimate), and yet these blatant, busy-body religionists, seem to so control the wealthy and influential classes as to override the true sentiment of the country. If these religious fanatics do not want to go to the Exposition on Sunday, let them stay away, and find entertainment in their churches and prayer-meetings, but why should it be in their power to prevent those who *do* want to go from going? What a gross injustice to the working people, who have but this one day on which to view the great exhibition, to have it closed against them.

There is an organization in this country which is a disgrace to the civilization and the intelligence of the age in which we live; it is the most ignorant, meddling, inquisitorial, unjust, persecuting, arbitrary, heartless, pharisaical and un-

patriotic association that exists to-day. It is called the "American Sabbath Union." The spirit that it manifests is that of the most unreasoning intolerance; which imprisons for opinion's sake, as it did in England in 1618, when Mrs. Trask languished for sixteen years in prison for having her own opinion on the subject of Sunday; and as it did recently in Tennessee, when three estimable (Christian) persons were incarcerated for weeks in jail, for the crime (!) of attending to their garden or farm duties on Sunday. It evinces precisely the same spirit that used the thumb-screw and the rack and the stake, to compel conformity to the dictates of fanaticism a few centuries ago.

The American Sabbath Union is *un-American*, in that it is utterly opposed to that great American principle which would entirely and forever separate the Church from the State.

Mr. B. O. Flower, in the *Arena* for December, 1892, says: "This intolerant spirit has, in recent years, crystallized itself into an organization known as the "American Sabbath Union." . . . It seeks to establish, in this Republic, the odious laws of the sun-worshipping, Christian-Pagan Constantine, and to persecute, with the ferocity of a Nero, all who do not believe as these narrow-minded children of Paganism."

We may well fear for the perpetuity of the freedom of which we have boasted, when such an association of bigots undertake to control legislation for the purpose of imposing their particular views upon the law of the country, in utter disregard of the rights of a great majority of our people.

Even those of the same religious persuasion, as are the members of the A. S. U.—and among them the clergy—have boldly protested against this usurpation of the rights of American citizens. The late Rev. Howard Crosby, D. D., has said: "The Christian Sabbath is a day observed by the individual according to his conscience, and with regard to which *the law has nothing to do*. We cannot urge the maintenance of the Christian Sabbath by law. This would be enforcing religion by law, and would be a dangerous infringement of our liberties."

There can be no greater danger to the priceless heritage of liberty, to the grand American idea of freedom from all hierarchical control, be it Roman Catholic or Protestant, than the success of the objects of such an organization as this American Sabbath Union.

Let every one who loves his country ; every one who believes liberty more precious than the unproved dogmas and absurd superstitions taught by irresponsible zealots ; every one who loves justice and who hates tyranny ; every one who believes in the "golden rule ;" every one who is swayed by kindness rather than prejudice ; every one who has read of the horrors which history records of the consequences of the Church fastening itself upon the State ; do all that he can to oppose this greatest enemy to our progress as a nation, and to our liberties as a people—the American Sabbath Union.

## PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY.

“The Christian religion has been tried for eighteen hundred years. The religion of Christ has yet to be tried.”—(*Lessing.*)

THE Christianity of Christ was a very simple religion. It was a religion of love ; of charitable thoughts ; of kind acts ; of good deeds. It was founded on the “golden rule ;” indeed, that was the *sum* of it. But from this simple religion has evolved, gradually, the repulsive religion of what is known as orthodox Christianity. From decade to decade, from generation to generation, from century to century, this evolving process has gone on ; each of these periods of time furnishing its quota of new dogmas, ceremonies and rites, until the Christianity of to-day has become as unlike the Christianity of Christ as are the gaudy decorations of the Pope of Rome unlike the plain garb of a Quaker.

Dr. Lewis G. Janes, in his book called *A Story of Primitive Christianity*, says : “The salvation of men in the teaching of Jesus, depended upon the acceptance of no dogmatic standard of truth, but solely upon righteous living. . . . The popular Christian doctrine of a vicarious atonement and substituted righteousness has no place in the teachings of the Nazarene prophet. . . . The conception of himself (Jesus,) or of another, as a Son of God, in any exclusive or supernatural sense ; of a God coming upon earth in human form ; would have been as abhorrent and unnatural to Jesus as it had ever been to his people (the Jews.) The trinitarian dogma is a belief as impossible to the true Israelite (as was Jesus) as any other form of polytheism or idolatry.”

As showing the advance in priest-made dogmas, even from one century to the next, Dr. Draper says : “Great is the difference between Christianity under Severus (born 146) and

Christianity under Constantine (born 274.) Many of the doctrines which at the latter period were pre-eminent, in the former were unknown. . . . As years passed on, the faith described by Tertulian (second century) was transferred into one more fashionable and debased."

T. W. Doane, in *Bible Myths*, says: "The sublime and simple theology of the primitive Christian—was gradually corrupted and degraded by the introduction of a popular mythology."

Rev. Edward Everett Hale, in *North American Review*, January, 1889, says: "I am very glad to have the attention of religious people brought back to the early literature which sets in new light the simple religion which was proclaimed by Jesus Christ; while it destroys the man-made theology of the last fifteen centuries."

The Christian religion (not the religion of Christ) has been formulated by the several councils of the Christian Church. As a sample of these councils, we may take that of Nice 321—more than half of the delegates to which council were arbitrarily dismissed from it, because their opinions were opposed to those of the Emperor Constantine. In it, like in most of the Church councils in after years, was exhibited a bitterness of feeling among the (remaining) delegates that made its proceedings most disgraceful. No political convention of modern times will compare, in uproar and tumult, deception and trickery, with these Church assemblies. Says Rev. Philip Shaff, D. D.: "There were also gathered at the councils (of the Christian Church) ignorance, intrigue, party passion; arrayed as hostile armies for open combat." The Christian religion being formulated under *such* circumstances, no wonder that it became, as it flowed down the centuries, as different from the religion of Christ, as is a mighty river, gathering impurities in its course, different from the pure and limpid waters of its original stream."

Rev. R. Heber Newton says: "In the early centuries creed followed creed till we got tired of trying to keep track of them. The same thing took place in the Reformation period. Every

nation spawned creeds. Let them open the Westminster Confession, the Thirty-nine articles, etc., and mark with a red pencil every faith on which Jesus Christ had spoken a word, and they would find that task an object lesson in the modern theology on fallen man—not a word on the atonement; future punishment, not a word; on hell scarcely a word, and so through the Reformation theology. . . . Will Christianity ever get back to Jesus Christ?”

“Christ’s teaching was one thrilling protest against ecclesiasticism. His life was one pathetic plea for religious freedom. He cut down doctrinism and dogmatism as a mower cuts down thistles. In his insistence on practical holiness, there was no room for chatter about creeds. This fervent young rabbi had no time to formulate a ‘shorter catechism.’”—(Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, *Forum*, May, 1889.)

Rev. John W. Chadwick says: “That legend which went on growing, century after century, until the theological conception of Jesus Christ was as unlike the actual man who trod the earth of Galilee, as “Pollock’s course of time, is unlike the simple songs that came straight from the heart of Robert Burns. If you know of any two things more unlike, then you can make a contrast of your own and it will be better than mine; for the more unlike the things that you contrast, the better will they image forth the difference between the actual Jesus and the theological being who in about three centuries was *substituted* for Jesus. . . . Any Jewish church of our own time is nearer to the primitive Christian orthodoxy (of Jerusalem) than any form of modern Christianity that vaunts its orthodoxy. . . . Had there been no Paul, Christianity would have been only a Jewish sect. . . . The conversion of the Roman Empire by Christianity was about equally the conversion of Christianity by the Roman Empire. The Empire became Christian; Christianity became Pagan.”

Alfred H. O’Donohue, late of Trinity College, Dublin, in his book, *Theology and Mythology*, says: “The doctrines that Jesus taught—the brotherhood of man and the condemnation of priestcraft—entitle him forever to the admiration and



gratitude of his race. . . . Christianity, as taught and understood by Jesus and his followers, has ceased to exist for sixteen hundred years. In modern Christianity hardly a trace of the religion of Jesus is discernible. . . . If Jesus and his true life were taken from Christianity, it is doubtful if it would excite notice.

The doctrines of the incarnation, of the resurrection, of the atonement, of the immaculate conception, of the divinity of Christ, of the "procession" of the Holy Ghost, of the Trinity, of inspiration of gospels or epistles, of the infallibility of a man or of a church, were all unknown to the founder of Christianity. Christ did not make the Christianity of to-day and is no more responsible for it than he is for the religion of Buddha or Mohammed; indeed there is as much semblance between either of these two religions and that of Christ's religion, as there is between the latter and the Christianity of to-day, which was *manufactured* by the "fathers" and by the clergy generally in the several centuries succeeding the time of Christ. The Bible is not the work of Moses, of David, of Saul, the four evangelists, but of those ecclesiastics who made those writings to correspond with the declarations of the Church; making such alterations, omissions and interpolations as suited their purposes. "The Bible is the creation of the Church; not the Church the creation of the Bible. . . . The Bible did not form the beliefs; the beliefs formed the Bible."

The doctrines of the immaculate conception and resurrection of Christ were in process of development only towards the close of the second century; in the middle or latter part of which century most of the books of the New Testament appeared. The name "New Testament" was not given till the third century, and during this century these writings were declared to be inspired; prior to which time those who claimed the New Testament to be inspired were denounced as heretics.

The observance of Sunday as a rest-day was first proclaimed in 321, and as the "Sabbath," in the seventeenth century.

The doctrine of the Trinity first appeared in the fourth cen-

tury. That of "inherited guilt" was promulgated in the fifth century.

The name "Bible" was first applied to the books of the Old and New Testament, collectively, in the fifth century. The season of "Lent" was first recognized in the fifth century.

The "Christian Era" was invented in the sixth century. It was not authoritatively determined upon what day the resurrection of Christ should be celebrated till the seventh century.

Transubstantiation became a dogma in the ninth century.

The celibacy of the clergy became a requisite in the eleventh century.

The dogma of the atonement also first appeared in the eleventh century.

The doctrine of eternal punishment for disbelievers in the Bible originated at the Council of Trent, 1545.

The infallibility of the Bible became a dogma of the Protestant Church in the sixteenth century.

The immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary (that she was born of Anne without original sin) became a dogma of the Romish Church in the nineteenth century.

Mosheim, in his Commentaries (p. 228) describes the Gnostics of the first century as those who pretend that they are able to communicate to mankind a correct knowledge of the Deity, the origin of the world, the nature of matter and the human soul. They were regarded as corrupters of the Christianity of Christ. The orthodox Christians of to-day hold the same pretentious and dogmatic relation to the pure religion of Christ that the Gnostics did in the first century and may be regarded, equally, as corrupters of true Christianity. The Agnostics of to-day far better represent the religion of Christ than do those assuming the name of Christian.

"The Christianity of Christendom is fundamentally opposed to the Christianity of Christ. In attacking ecclesiasticism, I am really defending the prophet of Nazareth."—(Alfred Momerie.)

"As the Church advanced in worldly power and position a

temper of deliberate and audacious fraud set itself in action for the spread of certain doctrines.”—(Dr. Mozley.)

“No one can have attentively studied the subject without being struck by the absence of any such dogmas from the earlier records of the teachings of Jesus.”—(Supernatural Religion.)

“The pure Deism of the first century was changed by the Church of Rome into the incomprehensible dogma of the Trinity.”—(Gibbon’s Christianity.)

The religion of Thomas Paine was very much nearer the religion of Jesus Christ than that of any of the orthodox clergy the world over. These self-righteous persons are either lamentably ignorant of Paine’s religion or lamentably deceptive and dishonest in denying that he had any religion. Would one who had no religion say (as did Thomas Paine,) “Do we want to contemplate the power, wisdom, munificence and mercy of God? We see them in the immensity of creation, in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehensible whole is governed, in the abundance with which He fills the earth and in His not withholding this abundance even from the unthankful?”

Paine’s religion was the same as that of the late Rev. Henry W. Bellows, D. D., and were Paine living to-day he would be one of the strictest of the *orthodox* Christian Church, in its Unitarian branch. His creed and his religion, as expressed by himself, was, “I believe in one God only and hope for happiness in the world to come . . . The world is my country; to do good is my religion.” That is all there was of the religion of Christ.

In Moncure D. Conway’s most interesting life of Thomas Paine, the author says of that truly logical book—the *Age of Reason*—that Paine regarded it as a *defense of true religion*, from its degradation by superstition or destruction by atheism, these, as he declares, being the purposes of his work.” Again Mr. Conway says, “So far as it is theological, the *Age of Reason* was meant to combat Infidelity.”

In writing to Samuel Adams, from France, Paine says:

“The people of France were running headlong into atheism, and I had the work (*Age of Reason*) translated into their own language *to stop them in that career* and fix them to the first article of every man’s creed, who has any creed at all—I believe in God.”

From the works of such eminent Christian writers as Rev. Samuel Davidson, D. D., Rev. Brooke Foss Westcott, D. D., Drs. Oort, Kuenen and Hooykas, and other investigators into the Christianity of Christ and the subsequent engrafting thereon of what the Church has made the Christianity of the centuries succeeding that of Christ, can be found such information as would amaze those who think that the Christianity of to-day is the same as that taught by its founder. Orthodox Christianity was utterly unknown to him. From the works of the writers alluded to can be shown facts which are *rarely, if ever, presented by any of the orthodox clergy*. It can be shown that no one knows who are the writers of the books of the Bible, or when such books were written, or what they were in the original.

There are no autograph writings of the books of either the Old or New Testament. Consequently there can be no evidence of any correct translation.

The priesthood have made these books to read just what it was their interest they should read. As to Christ himself, the records supposed to be furnished by persons of the names of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, are the only records of Christ’s life. These records differ materially. Among other differences is one of eleven years as to the time of Christ’s birth. They were not written till a century and a half after Christ’s death.

“The confused and irreconcilable accounts in the gospels of the life and death of Christ were manifestly *written to supply a want of the Church* in the second century.”—(Waite.)

It is now ascertained that probably no persons of the names of those to whom are attributed the records of Christ’s life, wrote those records; consequently they are anonymous writings, and therefore the whole of the life and ministry of

Christ has no authoritative name to satisfy us of its truthfulness. If such a person as Christ ever lived, he was doubtless a gentle-hearted, loving being, who was actuated by a desire to do all he could toward lightening the burdens, alleviating the sufferings and cheering the hearts of his fellowmen ; having his sympathies with the poor, the weak and the lowly ; always the enemy of injustice and tyranny. As illustrating how different this gentle character is sometimes presented to us, we quote from Luke xix : 27, which makes the kind and loving Jesus to say : " Those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay before me,"—words so utterly inconsistent with his nature could scarcely be imagined. No one who believes in the " meek and lowly " Jesus could possibly believe but that that quotation was the work of some ecclesiastical forger.

Col. R. G. Ingersoll has said : " For the man Jesus, who loved his fellowmen, I have the most profound respect ; but for Christianity, as taught in orthodox creeds, I have the most supreme contempt."

" Nothing can be more incredible than the account given of the birth of Jesus in the canonical gospels of Matthew and Luke. Nothing can be more revolting."—(Rev. J. W. Chadwick.)

The further we have come down the centuries from the time of Christ, the further we appear to have departed from the religion of Christ. It is perhaps more true to-day than during any of the eighteen centuries that are past that the Christian religion, as represented by the orthodox Church, is Christian only in name.

In the *Arena* for July, 1890, is an article by Rev. Carlos Martyn, D. D., entitled " *Churchianity (or so-called Christianity) vs. Christianity,*" which illustrates this thought. Dr. Martyn says : It (*Churchianity*) is like counterfeit coin—current, but false. . . . It puts the emphasis on *belief*, when it should put it on *conduct*. It builds *cathedrals* not *men*. Religion is transformed from a *principle* into an *institution*. We look for Christ and find a church. . . . *Phariseeism is resurrected and baptized with a Christian name.*"

There appears, however, at the present time, a revolt in all our churches against the dogmas which have so long stood between the Church and the religion of Christ. Christians themselves are beginning to think these dogmas incompatible with the enlightened age in which we live, and that they should be "relegated to the limbo into which are flung the cast-off garments of vagabond theories."

Many are earnestly and anxiously asking the question of Rev. Dr. Heber Newton—"Will Christianity ever get back to Jesus Christ?"

Efforts in that direction are making most successful progress.

The *Christian Register* of Boston says: "We are at the beginning of a movement in religion more extensive than any recorded in history. Compared with it the Protestant reformation is a small episode. The movement is wider than any one religion and deeper than any one can measure. Five hundred years from now it will be seen that *just before the twentieth century*, the creeds of all nations and churches began to break up, and that throughout the world there was a rush of religious feeling which *carried these fragments of creeds away.*"

The "signs of the times" were never more favorable than now for a change from the effete theology of ecclesiastical councils and the dogmatic creeds of *nominal* Christianity, to the Christianity of primitive times—the Christianity of Christ.

## CHRISTIANITY INCONGRUENT.

THE word incongruity embraces in its meaning inconsistencies, contradictions, inaccuracies and absurdities, and as all these so abound in the books of the Bible, and as Christianity has adopted the Bible as the foundation of its faith, it, of course, adopts all that is incongruous in the Bible, so that the title of this article would seem to be both comprehensive and appropriate.

To speak of all the incongruities in the Bible or of the Christian religion would be a task impossible of accomplishment by anyone. There are tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of them.

Prof. Ladd, of Yale University, says : " There are probably a hundred thousand errors in the text of the Bible."

The *Truth-Seeker* says : " In the collection of the manuscript for Grierback's edition, as many as 150,000 different readings of the scriptures are discovered."

Rev. John W. Chadwick says : " The history of the New Testament revision made generally known the fact that there were 150,000 disagreements in the various *M. S. of the New Testament alone*, upon which the reviewers were dependent for their knowledge of the original Greek. . . . While the first forty chapters are, for the most part, actually, Isaiah, the last twenty-seven are from another prophet, who lived *two centuries later*. *Yet there is not a hint of this in the revision*. . . . The Book of Daniel was written two hundred years *after Daniel's death*. . . . Hundreds of years elapsed from the time that the books of the Bible were collected and assumed their present form. Meantime they floated about, written upon tablets, or leaves of bark, and on parchment ;

they were copied and copied again ; they went through all sorts of changes ; all sorts of mistakes were made. . . . It was not thought a sin to change a manuscript a little here and there. . . . Contradiction disfigures page after page of the New Testament (as well as of the Old). In the first three gospels we have one picture of Jesus, and in the fourth gospel another. If Jesus was the Jesus of Matthew and Mark and Luke, it is impossible that he could have been the Jesus of John. . . . The Bible is partly true and partly false. . . . The Bible is not (as is claimed) a literary and moral unit. It contains sixty-seven different books, having in many instances no other connection than that afforded by the binders' stitching of leaves, and were written at different times throughout a period of fifteen hundred years, during which period the thoughts of men underwent great changes. . . . The Bible is composed of the most diverse elements, abounding in misapprehensions, contradictions and mistakes, and possesses no authority whatever. Every clergyman in the Protestant Church *knows* that these books have no validity. . . . Science teaches us how from primal germs the world has been evolved into its present shape. A single page of Faraday or Lyell signifies more than whole volumes of cosmogony like that of Genesis ! Think of all the precious time wasted to endeavor to make the Bible echo the great truths of Science ! . . . The great German critics, who gave up wealth and ease in their absorbing passion for truth, long ago convinced all scholars of the inaccuracies of Bible history ; but it was left to Bishop Colenso—as true a heart as England ever owned—to publish these inaccuracies so plainly that a wayfaring man, though a fool, may not err therein. These inaccuracies are largely characteristic of the New as well as of the Old Testament.”

The *Truth-Seeker* says : “ The criticism of the Pentateuch began as early as the eleventh century, chiefly among the Jews. The Christians were too ignorant to grapple the subject. Heathen authors, like Celsus and Julian, represented the Pentateuch as mythical, and paralleled its stories with pagan



mythology. . . . All the world knows about Jesus Christ is found in the four gospels. These gospels are *anonymous, unreliable and contradictory*. There is no evidence that one of them was written for at least one hundred and fifty years after the events they pretend to record had transpired. . . . No Greek, nor Roman, nor Jewish writer ever mentioned Jesus. Jesus himself did not claim to be more than man. He was regarded simply as a human teacher. . . . The attributing to Jesus of deity is the work of theologians. . . . All four gospel writers tell each a different story, and Paul, the one who wrote earlier than either, disagrees with them all. . . . The contradictions of the gospel writers, and the conduct of the apostles are inexplicable upon any theory which asserts that the writers knew any facts concerning events they pretended to record. . . . We find in the gospels contradictions so plain that one or the other must be false.”

Of course only a *very* few of the errors and disagreements in the Bible can be noticed here, but enough can be shown to illustrate the utter unreliability and absurdity, and the allegorical character of the book which has become an object of superstitious veneration, at least among the Protestant portion of Christian worshippers. What is this book and from whom does it emanate? No one knows who are the authors of these writings, and as there are no autographs of them extant, it is impossible to determine how they would compare with the originals. Of course they are the productions of persons just as human and just as fallible as any living to-day, and have been altered, added to and interpolated in the interest of a church. It is claimed that they were inspired by God. Is it possible that believers in the Bible are willing to admit that their God has furnished them with a book in which its false science, its inaccurate history, its incredible stories, its silly fables, its encouragement of polygamy, slavery, intemperance and deception, its cruelties and its obscenities are made so manifest? And yet such believers cannot fail of such admission if they would only read the Bible unprejudiced and without superstitious fear. Among others, many of the “fathers”

of the church have questioned the literal meaning, the truthfulness of the books of the Bible.

Judge R. B. Westbrook says: "Pluto, Josephus, Papias, Tertulian, Clement, Ambrose, Athanasius and Augustine regarded the so-called Mosaic account of the creation and fall, an allegory."

Maimonides, a learned Jewish rabbi, says (speaking of the Bible): "Taken according to the letter, this work gives the most absurd and extravagant idea of divinity."

Rabbi Kohler, of the Temple Beth-El says: "People have made a fetich of the Bible, drawing from it their geology, their astronomy, their history, and all their science. By it they justified the burning of witches and heretics, slavery and polygamy. Chafing under the despotic sway of the book, men at last exposed its errors. Condemn not those iconoclasts like Voltaire and Thomas Paine; their ridicule emancipated the race from the thralldom of the book."

Even the great apostle Paul himself speaks of what is written of the "Sons of Abraham" as "an allegory."—(Gall. iv: 24.)

Prof. John W. Draper says: "It is the decision of many learned and pious English and German moderns that the *whole* Pentateuch is unhistoric; that it contains the most extraordinary contradictions and impossibilities, sufficient to involve the credibility of the whole."

Rev. Myron Adams, of Boston, in his book, the "Creation of the Bible," speaks of Genesis as largely mythical, and its older parts products of oral tradition. The creation of the Bible began with Ezra, after the Babylonish exile, and adds: "The books of Job and Daniel are fictitious."

"The Bible, although one of the most read, yet is the most *misread* of books, and the least understood."—(Clodd's "*Childhood of Religion*.")

"Modern Biblical criticism has shattered the traditional theories of the authorship of the Biblical book."—(Rev. C. A. Briggs, D. D.)

"The Bible is untrustworthy."—Rev. E. G. Smyth, D. D.)

"The Bible has sanctioned the violation of every part of

the universally recognized moral code. It has outraged decency by its obscene recitals.”—(John E. Remsburgh.)

“The generally recorded opinion is that the manuscript of the books of Moses, Judges, Mordecai, Kings, Chronicles, Job, Samuel and others were destroyed by fire when Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem.”—(Chamber’s Encyclopædia.)

Rev. Minot J. Savage says : “The Books of the Bible are full of contradictions and errors, while the moral tone of many parts of them is such as to make it impiety in us to credit them to a just and loving God. . . . It is incongruous, even to absurdity, to think of God as a localized, outlined Being, setting forth his arbitrary decrees like a celestial Kaiser. . . . It is well known to all competent scholars, that Moses had no hand in composing the five books traditionally ascribed to him. It is also well known that the Jews did not attempt to tell any story of Adam or the fall until after they had borrowed it in the days of their captivity. These things are only pagan traditions, and there is no more reasonable basis for them than there is for one of the tales of the Arabian Nights, and yet they have stood in the way of the world’s knowledge ; have been made the means of darkening human minds ; oppressing human hearts and kindling fires for the burning of brave and noble men for ages. . . . The first man is now found close on the borders of the animal world, and in the light of this discovery the utterly baseless tradition of the fall becomes absurd. No *fall*, but the *ascent* of man is what now appears. This one fact is the death-blow to the old theology. In the light of to-day the plan of salvation has no rational excuse for continued existence one day more.”

The late Rev. N. A. Staples says : “Take the brush of criticism and paint the errors (of the Bible) into a dark background ; if not done by those who love the Bible, it will be *roughly* done by those who do *not* love it. The inconsistencies of the old claim for the Bible are seen and perfectly well understood *outside the church*, and if the pulpit is not magnanimous enough to confess its old errors, the Bible will be

thrown aside altogether. People must be taught that the Bible cannot stand in the way of science or philosophy, nor supersede individual judgment."

According to orthodox christianity, "We are required to believe that Jehovah, the ruler of all worlds, the pure, spiritual, supreme, ineffable creator of the universe, our father who is in heaven, selected one favored people (who never numbered one per cent. of the earth's population) from the rest of his children; sanctified fraud; commanded cruelty; contended (and for awhile in vain) with the magi of other gods; wrestled bodily with one patriarch; eat cakes and veal with another; sympathized with and shared in human passions; manifested scarcely one untainted moral excellence; we are required to do this painful violence to our feelings and our understandings, simple because these coarse conceptions prevailed some thousand years ago among a people whose history, as written by themselves, is certainly not of a nature to inspire us with any extraordinary confidence in their virtue or their intellect."—(Greg's "*Creed of Christendom.*")

"The God of the Bible is a moral montrosity."—(Henry Ward Beecher.)

"Vishnu, with a necklace of skulls, is figure of love and mercy, compared to the God of the Old Testament."—(Rev. Theodore Parker.)

"From the aspersions of the pulpit I would rescue the reputation of the Deity."—(Ingersoll.)

But let all read the Bible for themselves, and they cannot but be convinced that they are worshipping a God possessed of human frailties, reverencing a book that contains more untruths and indecencies than any other, and encouraging a religion that is deceptive, superstitious, and opposed to the conclusions of intelligent thought.

In Deut. xxxii: 27, God is said to have "*feared* the wrath of the enemy."

In Ex. xxxii, Moses *rebukes God*, saying (12th verse), "Turn from thy fierce wrath and repent of this evil against thy people (16th verse) and *the Lord repented.*"

Gen. vi : 6, tells us that "it repented the Lord that he had made man, . . . it grieved him at his heart."

In Num. xiv : 16, is shown how far short of omnipotence God came.

In Judges i : 19, we are told that God "could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley."

God is said to be omnipresent, and yet in Gen. xi : 5, we read that he "*came down* to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded."

In 2 Sam. xii : 8, God makes David a present of Saul's wives.

In 2 Sam. xxi : 8, "the *five* sons of Michal, the daughter of Saul" are spoken of, and yet in chap. vi, 23, we read that "Michal (the daughter of Saul) had *no* child unto the day of her death."

In Ex. xxi, slavery is regulated, 6th verse : "and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him forever."

Lev. xxv : 44 and 46 : "of them (the heathen) shall you buy bondmen and bondmaids, . . . They shall be your bondmen forever."

In Num. xiv : 34, God tells us of his "breach of promise."

Jer. iv : 10 : "Ah, Lord God ! surely thou hast greatly deceived this people."

Jer. xx : 7 : "Oh Lord, though hast deceived me."

Ezek. xiv : "If the prophet be deceived, . . . I, the Lord, have deceived that prophet."

2 Chron. xiii : tells how God encouraged the spirit to enter the prophets of Ahab, and to put lying spirits in their mouths.

In Jer. xv : 18, God is asked the question, "Wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar."

2 Thess. ii : 11 : "God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie."

1 Kings, xxii : 23 : "The Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouths of all these thy prophets."

In one place we are told to swear by the Lord's name, and in another to "swear not at all."

Christ is called the "prince of peace," and his teachings are spoken of as the "gospel of peace" and yet he is made to say, "Suppose ye that I am come to bring peace on earth? I tell you nay, but rather division. The father shall be divided against the son, . . . the mother against the daughter, . . . the mother-in-law against the daughter-in-law" (Luke xii : 51-53); "He that hath no sword let him sell his garment and buy one," (xxii : 36).

Mark xii : "The brother shall betray the brother to death, the father the son."

In Rev. xii : 7, it says, "there was war in heaven," therefore a peaceful and happy abode in heaven cannot be counted upon.

What are the Bible teachings as to the use of stimulants? In Ps. civ : 15, we are told how glad the heart of man is made by wine.

In Prov. xxxi : 6-7, the advice furnished is to "give strong drink unto him who is ready to perish, and wine unto those who be of a heavy heart. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more."

In Eccl. ix : 7, we are recommended "to drink wine with a merry heart."

"Drink, yea, drink *abundantly*."—(Songs of Sol. v : 1.)

"Wine which cheereth God and man."—(Judges ix : 13.)

Jer. xxv : 27-28, "Drink ye and be drunken. . . . If they refuse, . . . then shalt thou say unto them, 'Thus said the Lord of hosts, ye shall certainly drink.'"

John (i : 18) says : "No man has seen God at any time," but Jacob says (Gen. xxxii : 30) : "I have seen God face to face."

Matt. (vii : 8) says : "Every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth." *Per contra*, we read in Prov. (i-28), "Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but shall not find me."

Paul tells that God is not the author of confusion, but of *peace* (1 Cor. xiv :), but in Ex. (xv : 3), he is spoken of as a "man of war."

We are told that "God is love," is "very pitiful and of tender mercy," and again we are told "God is a consuming fire."

"The New Testament is filled with contradictions. The gospels do not agree even upon the terms of salvation, upon the gospel or mission of Christ. They do not tell the same story regarding the betrayal, crucifixion, resurrection or ascension of Christ. The evangelists do not give the same account of the same miracles, and the miracles are not given in the same order. They do not agree even in the genealogy of Christ."—(Ingersoll.)

According to Matt. (xxvii : 5) Judas "hanged himself." But we are told in Acts (i : 18) that he died an entirely different death.

In the genealogy of Christ, as furnished by Matthew, there are twenty-eight generations, while that furnished by Luke gives forty-three generations from David to Christ. Both accounts in these lines of descent are almost totally different, but they agree in the fact that *Jesus was the son of Joseph*. This, however, is all contradicted by other portions of the New Testament, which calls Jesus the "son of God," and makes the absurd, unnatural, impossible claim that he was born of a virgin.

According to John one woman came to the sepulchre ; according to Matthew two women came ; according to Mark three women came and according to Luke (not less than) four women came.

According to Luke (xxiv : 50-51) Christ ascended from Bethany ; (but if Acts (i : 9-12) is to be taken as authority, the ascension was from Mount Olivet.

In the "sermon on the mount," we are told to do what is impracticable not only, but that which would sap the foundations of social life.

To turn the left cheek to one who smites you on the right ; to give your coat to one who takes your cloak ; to go two miles, because you have been compelled to go one mile ; to give equal wages to one who works one hour as to those who

have for twelve hours, borne the heat and burden of the day ; to treat the prodigal with greater favor than the frugal son ; to give to him that asketh, and to turn not away from him that would borrow ; to require the selling of all that a man hath and the giving of the proceeds to the poor ; to urge the taking of no thought for the morrow ; to love your enemies and those who would curse and hate and despitefully use you ; would be to encourage wrong, injustice, improvidence, malignity.

The Bishop of Peterborough said that "society would not hold together a week if the sermon on the mount was practiced."

Rev. Theo. Parker says : "It is easy to show, if we have the exact words of Jesus, that he was mistaken in some points of the greatest magnitude ; in the character of God ; the existence of the devil ; the eternal damnation of men ; in the interpretation of the Old Testament ; in the doctrine of demons and in the end of the world within a few years."

That Christ (and his apostles) believed the end of the world to be in their day is witnessed by the repeated sayings of Christ. "There be some standing here which shall not taste death till they see the Kingdom of God" (Luke ix : 27.) "This generation shall not pass away until all these things be done" (Mark xiii : 30). Peter also says (iv : 7), "The end of all things is at hand."

Either Christ never spoke of the end of the world occurring in the time of those then living or his prediction was not (of course) verified. Which horn of the dilemma will the Church accept ?

No quotations from those portions of the Bible which indulge in vulgar, indecent and immoral utterances have here been made, fearing to shock the sensibility, offend the taste, or bring the crimson hue to the cheek of my refined, innocent and virtuous hearers.

In Lord Bacon's works, vol. xiv, pp. 143-151, are given what are called "Christian paradoxes," from which a few extracts may be taken : "A Christian is one who believes



things he cannot comprehend. . . . He believes three to be one and one to be three ; a father not to be older than his son. . . . He believes a virgin to be a mother of a son and that very son to be her maker. . . . He believes a most just God to have punished a most just person. . . . He praises God for his justice, yet fears him for his mercy. The more he foresakes worldly things the more he enjoys them. . . . He is a peacemaker, yet is continually fighting and an irreconcilable enemy. . . . He knoweth he can do nothing of himself, yet labors to work out his own salvation. . . . He prays with all his heart not to be led into temptation, yet rejoices when he is fallen into it. . . . The world will sometimes account him a saint, when God accounteth him a hypocrite.”

The first two chapters of Genesis contains two entirely different accounts of creation.

It is evident that in the land of Nod, from whence Cain obtained his wife, there were people living contemporaneously with Adam.

The *myth* of the “*fall of man*” is gradually giving place to the almost universal *truth* of the *rise* of man from lower orders of beings. The theory—or rather fact—of evolution has done more to unsettle orthodox theology (among scholars and thinkers, at least) than anything that has occurred in the history of the Christian Church since the adoption of the heliocentric system of astronomy. Intelligent people no longer consult the Bible for information on the subject of astronomy, geology or biology ; are seriously questioning its history, its truthfulness and its morality.

The Bible is authority for placing the age of the world at six thousand years, and yet there are villages in Switzerland which are known to be seven thousand years old.

Agassiz found human bones in Florida which he estimated to be ten thousand years old.

The discovery of burnt brick under sixty feet of Nile alluvium would indicate its age at twenty thousand years.

“ A human skeleton found at a depth of sixteen feet, under four buried forests, has been allowed an antiquity of fifty thousand years.”

John Fiske says that the American continent was inhabited by human beings at least four hundred thousand years ago.

Tools of human workmanship have been discovered which Wallace reckons were left five hundred thousand years ago.

Lesly believes our race to have been upon the earth for *very many* hundreds of thousands of years.

Prof. McGee (at the Scientific Convention, Rochester, April 22, 92,) expressed the opinion that the duration of life on the earth was not less than fifteen million years.

Not only is the Bible inconsistent, contradictory, inaccurate and absurd, but the effect of its teachings has been, probably, more calamitous than has resulted from any other single cause. It has restrained innocent mirth by requiring us to “mourn and weep.” It has furnished authority for the husband to “*rule over*” the wife. It has encouraged tyrants by urging submission to “the powers that be.” It has discouraged learning. It has been the most inveterate foe of science. It has incited bigotry. It has encouraged the fabulous, the marvelous, the miraculous. It has made superstition its chief and almost entire support. It has held virtuous conduct as secondary to its dogmatic postulates. It has made imitators of the attempted or pretended sacrifice of Isaac, many an innocent child having become the victim of some fanatical Christian parent. It has shattered the reason of millions of intelligent, but credulous, human beings, who have had faith in the (so-called) “inspired word.”

Prof. Felix Adler says : “ It is a paradox that the gentlest, most loving, religious teacher whoever lived should have become the founder of a religion that has, perhaps, shown more cruelty and shed more blood than any other.”

Deut. xiii : 6-9, furnishes the warrant by which “from the tenth to the end of the sixteenth century, not less than three million ‘heretics’—scholars and free inquirers—had to expiate their love of truth in the flames of the stake.”

At least five million of our fellow-beings were sacrificed on the altar of fanaticism during the crusades alone.

“The extermination of the Moriscos reduced the population of Spain by seven millions.”—(Prof. Oswald.)

The English author, Grant, states the result of belief in the verse of the Bible, “Thou shalt not permit a witch to live,” to be the martyrdom of nine millions of human beings.

“The dogma of exclusive salvation by faith made forcible conversion appear an act of mercy, and stimulated those wars of aggression that have cost the lives of more than thirty million of our fellow-men.”—(Oswald.)

“Religion raging with inhuman zeal,  
Arms every hand and points the fatal steel—  
Whatever names divine the parties claim,  
In craft and fury they are both the same.”

In concluding this line of thought, I give what are infinitely better (of course) than any words of my own, those of the incomparable Ingersoll :

“The real oppressor, enslaver and corrupter of the people is the Bible. That book burnt heretics, built dungeons, founded the Inquisition, and trampled upon all the liberties of man. That book spread the pall of superstition over the colleges and schools. That book puts out the eyes of science and makes honest investigation a crime. That book fills the world with bigotry, hypocrisy and fear. . . . If cathedrals had been universities, if dungeons of the Inquisition had been laboratories, if Christians had believed in character instead of creed, if they had taken from the Bible all the good and thrown away the wicked and absurd, if domes of temples had been observatories, if priests had been philosophers, if missionaries had taught the useful arts, if astrology had been astronomy, if the black art had been chemistry, if superstition had been science, if religion had been humanity, this world would have been a heaven filled with love, with liberty and joy.

## TAXATION OF CHURCH PROPERTY.

THERE is no ranker injustice than that a portion of the community should be compelled, by law, to pay for the support of institutions in which it not only does not believe, but which it regards as a positive injury to the well-being of the community at large.

And yet such injustice is in constant practice among us by the system now prevailing in nearly every part of our country, and known as that of exempting Church property from taxation.

Why is this done? It is because an influential portion of the community *assumes* that the Churches exert a moral influence, and that *therefore*, the people at large should be compelled to support the Churches; this influential portion of the community also *impudently* claiming that there is no morality outside of Christianity!

There are other institutions, other agencies besides Christianity, which exert a moral influence on the community, but which are not exempt, and do not claim exemption, from taxation.

But *do* the Churches exert a moral influence? *Do* they encourage that enlightened desire for knowledge, that persistent, unbiased search for truth, which is the basis of true morality? *Do* they discourage that injustice with the practice of which no morality can be genuine? *Do* they recognize the moral obligation demanded by the "golden rule?" *Do* they render to Cæsar (or the State) the things that are Cæsar's," or, rather, do they not utterly repudiate the demands which Christ thus makes, by *refusing* to render to the State that which is its due, as tax on their Church property?

The superstitions which are encouraged in both the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches are, and have been for centuries, the chief obstacles to the advance of civilization, of intellectual and scientific and elevating thought. The immoral doctrine of the atonement, that the innocent could justly be punished for the crimes or sins of the guilty; that upright men and women are to suffer endless torment for no other reason than that they act upon the dictates of their consciences, which have been enlightened by the free exercise of their intellectual faculties, while murderers and others who have led the most reprobate of lives are to enjoy an eternity of bliss, if only at the last moment of their wretched existence they profess faith in the dogmas of the Christian Church; the teachings of the Bible, its untrustworthy statements and obscene recitals; all these inculcations of Christianity are of so objectionable a character as to impel those opposed to it to do what they can to lessen its influence and as far as possible to arrest its progress. As T. B. Wakeman, Esq., says: "Those opposed to the exemption of Church property have conscientious convictions against furnishing means to teach the doctrines of total depravity, hell, fall of man, atonement, forgiveness of sins by prayer, absolution by penance, baptism, infallibility of Pope, Church, Bible or revelation."

Statistics prove that, with rare exceptions, our criminal class have been brought under the influence of the Church, either Roman Catholic or Protestant. Dexter A. Hawkins, an eminent lawyer in the City of New York, who made such matters very largely the study of the closing years of his active and useful life, has shown by figures that attendants on the schools of the *Christian* Church became inmates of jails, in the proportion of *more than three to one* of those who were educated in our *public* schools.

And yet, notwithstanding the conscientious convictions of persons opposed to the influences of the Churches, notwithstanding the *proven* demoralization of their teachings, notwithstanding that two-thirds of the inhabitants of the country are *not* church-goers, and have no interest whatever in the

maintenance of the Church, these persons are *forced* to contribute to the support of the Church, *compelled* to pay for its maintenance.

The system known as exempting Church property from taxation is an *evasion* of the well-known principle which underlies the Constitution of the United States and of the several States with reference to the question of religion, there being express provisions against the donating of the public moneys for the support of religion, or indeed of even the recognition of any religion. We have the high authority of the late Judge Story of the Supreme Court of the United States for saying that it is unconstitutional for any one to "be compelled to . . . support any place of worship or to maintain any ministry against his consent."

What is this exemption of Church property from taxation but an "evasion?"

What difference does it make whether our legislators openly donate so much of the public money every year to the support of the Churches, or whether such Churches are exempted by legislative action from the operation of a general tax law? None whatever.

"Tax exemption is equivalent to direct appropriation."  
 "An exemption is simply the presentation of a receipted bill for taxes."

"In this country, where we are wont to indulge in the proud boast of freedom from any "entangling alliance" whatever with the Church, we are contributing to the support of the Church, practically, precisely the same as in those countries where a union of Church and State is recognized.

The exemption of Church property from taxation, in utter disregard of the rights of a minority, is an abuse of power which should be expected only from monarchical governments. It is opposed to every principle upon which a republican government is founded.

Let no one say that we have not a Union of Church and State in this country so long as the practice of exempting Church property from taxation continues.

The attendants of these untaxed Churches talk of morality, of honesty, of justice ! Can there be anything more unjust, more dishonest, and consequently more immoral than the acts of Church members who countenance such an evasion of law, such a violation of principle, such gross wrong to other members of the community ?

This is not a question in favor of—or against—any religion, but of *principle*, the principle that every member of the community is entitled to the same rights, precisely, as any other member of the community, and that no person shall be required to pay for the support of the Christian religion any more than a Christian should be required to pay for the support of Mohammedanism, of Agnosticism, or of (what is known among Christians as) Infidelity. Thomas Jefferson says, “It is wicked and tyrannical to compel any man to support a religion in which he does not believe.”

The theory of our government is that all interests that are protected by the State should contribute equally to the support of the State. If the Churches do not contribute to the support of the State they are clearly not entitled to the protection of the State. Churches are protected by our police and fire departments, and when injured or destroyed by mob violence the city pays for the damages done ; and yet they contribute not a dollar for the protection accorded them.

Every taxpayer is greatly interested in this question of exempting Church property from taxation ; for every dollar that is exempted becomes so much additional burden upon the non-exempt ; the non-exempt being compelled to pay whatever sum may be exempted. An illustration may give force to this fact. We suppose a community to exist where there are but two owners of real property, and where it is necessary to raise by tax, say \$5,000 for its support. Each owner consequently contributes \$2,500 in taxes. But if one of these owners is exempt from the payment of his tax, of course the burden of the whole \$5,000 falls upon the other. Here is seen the great injustice, the gross outrage, done to the non-exempt owner.

Samuel B. Duryea, of Brooklyn, very properly says : "All exemption of Church property, on the ground that it is a religious corporation, is a trespass upon the freedom, liberty and equality of the thought of the people. . . . Any institution that is exclusive has no right to claim exemption, and if it is unable to exist without State support, it should be swept away."

Benjamin Franklin says : "A religion that depends on the State for support, is, for that reason, a bad religion."

The New York *Evening Post*, while conducted by William Cullen Bryant, said : "The separation of Church and State should include the total discontinuance of contributions of public moneys, direct or indirect, to the support of any religious institution."

President Garfield said : "The divorce between Church and State should be so absolute that no Church property anywhere, in any State or in the Nation, should be exempt from equal taxation."

Professor A. L. Rawson says : "The votaries of the Bible, by the exemption of Church property from taxation, divert a considerable portion of the public revenue to sectarian purposes. This they do in a government whose fundamental law contains a protest against the methods of government by the Church. In that way they enjoy equal protection for their Church property and withhold the taxes by which that protection is secured."

The New York *Times* recently said : "Through the exemption of Church property the people have to pay towards the support of all Churches, without reference to their own belief in the teachings of any of them. . . . There is no reason why large plots of land and costly edifices should be free from taxes, while the humble home of the poor has, *on that account*, to pay an *increased* share to the public revenue."

James Parton says : "Whatever property the State protects ought to contribute its proportion to the State's support. If Church property is to be exempt from the charge of supporting the government, then should the government be exempt from



the charge of protecting it . . . the infinite wrong of taxing a workingman's home to its full value and letting a ten million dollar cathedral go tax free."

Rev. Franklin Wilson, before the Taxpayers' Association of Baltimore, said (in substance): "The Mohammedan, Mormon, Spiritualist, Agnostic, may demand exemption as well as the Christian. Again, injustice is shown when the rich, refined church-goers of the elegant cathedral receive a far larger exemption bonus than the hard-working, devoted members of the mission chapel."

Rev. Dr. Shipman, of Christ Church, New York City, says: "That which is protected by government, may justly be compelled to maintain it. . . . I would like to see all Church property throughout this land taxed to the last dollar's worth."

The late Bishop Phillips Brooks says: "Every institution in which the doctrine of a particular Church is inculcated ought, for its own sake and for the State's sake, to be guarded most jealously from any connection with State support."

Protests against the great wrong of exempting Church property from taxation have been heard from a large majority of the secular press of this country, also from many religious publications, notably the *Independent* and *Christian Union*.

The Baptist Preachers Association of Baltimore recently voted in favor of taxing Church property.

The *Christian Statesman* says that "the Jarvis Street Baptist Church of Toronto recently adopted a resolution declaring its protest against the exemption of Church property from taxation, as being contrary to the principle which ought to regulate the relation of the State to all ecclesiastical bodies."

Encouragement may be gathered from the fact that the subject of taxing Church property is being agitated in all parts of our country, and as showing that some progress has already been made it may be mentioned that in the States of California, Washington and New Hampshire, Church property—under certain conditions—is now subject to taxation.

A careful examination of authorities on the subject of the value of Church property in the United States which is exempt

from taxation, induces the selection of the figures of Rev. James Freeman Clarke, in his "*Ten Great Religions*," as conservative estimates and which seem approximately correct. These are, in 1850, \$87,000,000; 1860, \$171,000,000; 1870, \$354,000,000.

Samuel Roberts, in the Illinois Social Science Club (July 25, 1891), estimated exempt Church property in 1880 at \$746,294,833.

These figures (about doubling each decade) justify Judge Westbrook in estimating exempt Church property in 1890 at \$1,500,000,000. And also justify General Grant's estimate for 1900 of \$3,000,000,000.

At two per cent. on this sum there are *sixty millions* of dollars of taxes unpaid by those whose property is protected by the State and who in all justice *should* pay them, but which taxes are forced by wrongful exemptions, from the pockets of those who have no direct interest in the property exempted.

At the above rate of increase in the value of the Church property we may expect to see it rise in 1930 to \$25,000,000,000, and to the impressive figures in 1950 of \$100,000,000,000.

In Thaddeus B. Wakeman's able address before the Legislature, on the subject of tax exemption he states that "in February, 1885, the New York City commissioners made a report to the Legislature of the State, in which it was shown that in said city property actually occupied by Churches and exempted from all taxation amounted to \$42,137,500, miscellaneous exempted property (not public) \$33,394,930; nearly all of this (miscellaneous exempted) property is under the control and influence of the Churches." So that to the amount exempted from taxation for property "actually occupied by the Churches should be added, say 75 per cent. for *other* untaxed institutions under the control and influence of the Churches."

Assuming that in other parts of the country there is a similar exemption from taxation of property under control of the Churches, in addition to the exempted property actually

occupied by the Churches,—say 75 per cent. additional—and we are forced to add to the figures, which we have stated as the amount which in 1950 we may expect to see the value of Church property rise to the sum of \$75,000,000,000.

Nor is this all. If we consider the remitting to the Churches and to institutions controlled by them, of assessments for improvements, which *all others* are compelled to pay; also the amount *directly* appropriated to religious organizations *annually*, and the *occasional* gifts to churches, etc.; we are far under the mark (we think) when we add therefor 25 per cent. on the estimated amount of Church property exempted from taxation.

These estimates are confirmed by Mr. Wakeman, who says: “The property actually in use by Churches in this State and exempted will amount to \$150,000,000, while the institutions, etc., and their practical influence and control will doubtless more than *double* that amount.”

Calling the population of New York State, about one-tenth of that of the United States, the figures of Mr. Wakeman—\$150,000,000, for exempted Church property in New York State,—corresponds with General Grant's estimate of \$1,500,000,000, for the exempted Church property of the United States in 1890 and (assuming that Church property doubles in value every decade) it also corresponds with our expectation of \$100,000,000,000 as the value in the United States in 1950 of Church property alone; and if we add to this double that sum for other exempt property under the control of the Church (further to correspond with Mr. Wakeman's figures), we have the startling figures of \$200,000,000,000, as the value of the property of Churches and in control of them in 1950 and in 1975—during the life-time of many now living—the appalling sum of \$1,000,000,000,000!!

What reflection do these figures suggest? Do they not turn the thoughts of meditative people to those periods in the history of the world when a remedy was sought for the injustice and wrong of government protection to Church property, by exempting it from taxation, and thus increase the

holdings of property by the Church and the corresponding decrease of the holdings of other property?

In the contemplation of the above figures we cannot too earnestly or too speedily sound the note of warning of the consequences sure to befall our country, if the aphorism that "history repeats itself," prove true with us.

Col. Ingersoll says: "If Church property is allowed to go without taxation, it is only a question of time when the Churches will own a large percentage of the property of the civilized world and thus become dangerous to the liberties of mankind."

E. J. Donnell, Esq., of New York City, says: "Taxation and the private and corporate ownership of property have always been practically recognized as inseparable conditions of industrial society. The time always comes, when society recognizes as a truth that *property exempted from taxation becomes* in time, in equity, *the property of the whole community*. The frequent confiscations of Church property during the past three or four centuries, could not have taken place without that justification. The long exemption from taxation enjoyed by the Church and the nobility in France fully justified the confiscation that took place during the great revolution. In my opinion the government stopped far short of its rights in that case."

In the New York *Tribune* of February 22, 1873, is a communication from a Roman Catholic clergyman, well known for his enlightened mind and public spirit. After speaking of the great wrong to the non-exempt by the exemption of Church property, he says: "The State will sell the property of its citizens for non-payment of taxes. No one questions the right of the State to do so. Well, then, if one portion of the community pays the taxes of another portion (which is practically done where the latter portion is exempt from taxation) may not such (former) portion become of right the owner of the exempted property? May it not, in justice, demand it? This is a serious view to take, but is it not equity? Any how it *has often led to confiscation.*"

Mr. Wakeman says : "The question will have to be tried out, which is the real government of the people, the Republic or the Church?"

General Grant says : "Such vast amount of untaxed Church property, receiving all the protection and benefits of the government, without bearing its proportion of the burdens and expenses of the same, will not be looked upon acquiescently by those who have to pay the taxes ; and if permitted to continue will probably lead to great trouble in our land before the close of the nineteenth century ; possibly to sequestration without constitutional authority *and through blood.*"

James Parton says : "In some countries of the old world one-fourth, in others one-half, of the property of the realm was exempt from taxation. . . . At the beginning of the French revolution two-fifths in quantity and more than one-half in value of the real property in France belonged to the Church. . . . What was the consequence? Bankruptcy, pauperism and finally revolution and confiscation. It is a philosophical truth that the same causes, under the same circumstances, will produce the same effects. Let us then learn wisdom from the folly of others and make *all* property bear its share of the common burdens ; and thus escape injustice, dishonesty, pauperism, as well as revolution and confiscation. We commenced wrong by exempting *any* property from taxation. Let us take a new departure, before it is too late."

The unjust practice of exempting Church property from taxation was part of that abominable system by which the people were forced to contribute their efforts, their influence and their money in support of the "divine right" of priests and of kings, and it is to the great Christian (!) emperor that we are indebted for inaugurating the practice.

Says Mr. Duryea : "As early as the year 359, an attempt was made to have the lands belonging to the Church exempt from all taxation. It was due to the demoralizing influence of the reign of Constantine, when the Church united in the

political intrigue of a corrupt empire. Throughout all the conflicts among nations to the present day, the evil influence of the uniting of Church and State may be traced through every Christian nation on the face of the earth."

It is difficult to understand how any honorable Christian can defend such a wrong as that of compelling non-Christians to contribute to the support of the Christian religion, unless it be that Christians regard the dogmas of the Church of more importance than principle, than justice, than constitutional provisions of law. And it is also difficult to understand how any intelligent and patriotic Christian can shut his eyes to the calamitous consequence which, in time, is *sure* to result from the enormous and alarming growth of the Church, by reason of the system against which this article is written as a most profoundly earnest and solemn protest.

## INTOLERANCE.

“There is no religious person who, according to his temperament, does not hate, despise, or pity, the adherents of a sect different from his own.”

“There does not yet exist upon the earth a true tolerance.”

“The dominant religion always makes its superiority felt in a very cruel and injurious manner towards the weaker sects.”

Everywhere a jealous God is worshipped.”

“Each nation believes itself his friend, to the exclusion of all others.”

“The founders of religions, and the priests who maintain them, have persuaded their votaries that the religions of others were ungodly and abominable.”

“This is the way religion succeeded in closing the heart.”—  
*Jean Meslier.*

THERE is nothing more true of religion in general, than is stated in the above lines, but more especially is it true of the Christian religion. Christians assume a superiority of intelligence, which displays itself either in pitying, or in disdain, or in hating, any one who does not think as they do ; while the fact is that there cannot be found, the world over, a class of persons who are so utterly ignorant as to why they believe as they do, as are Christians. They never pretend to inquire for themselves into the truth of the remarkable doctrines which they cherish ; on the contrary, *pride* themselves that their belief is *not* in accordance with the teachings of reason, but that they *believe by faith*. This “belief by faith” is carried to the extent that the more ignorant a Christian is, the more “faith” he has in his Christianity. Ignorance is said to be the mother of devotion ; so it is of intolerance. Moncure D. Conway says of intolerance, that it is “the least

pardonable form of ignorance." So it need not be wondered that, of all intolerant people, Christians are the most intolerant; as is evidenced by the fact that their persecutions have been more bitter than have been those of the adherents of any other religion. Christianity is responsible for the shedding of more blood than any other religion that ever existed. To the honor of the Buddhist religion, it may be said that it has never persecuted for opinions' sake, or shed one drop of human blood. The inhuman persecutions for witchcraft, which have so disgraced the name of Christianity, are utterly unknown in the religions of Brahma, or Zoroaster.

"All the heathen persecutions of Christians put together, are nothing in comparison with the horrors of the crusade against witches, set on foot by members of the Christian Church."—(J. H. Long, in *Popular Science Monthly* for July, 1893.)

The Moors in the middle ages gave protection to the Jews from Christian persecution.

It is an historical fact that, after Christianity became ascendant in the fourth century, for more than a thousand years the light of literature became almost extinct. Its intolerance of new thought, of scientific discoveries, seriously retarded the progress of intelligence. Had it not been for the Christian bigots of those times, the great truths recently developed might have been known many centuries earlier. Europe is indebted to a rival religion (the Mohammedan) for the rescue of what intelligence Christianity permitted to remain.

And so through the history of the Christian Church, from the days of Constantine till even now, may be found a record of greater intolerance, more bitterness of feeling, more extensive and cruel persecutions, than can be found in the history of any other system that ever existed.

"The domestic unhappiness arising from difference of belief, was probably almost, or altogether, unknown in the world before the introduction of Christianity.—(Lecky.)

Protestants denounce the exhibition of intolerance displayed



by the Catholic Church, but precisely the same spirit is manifested by the Protestant Church. There is little to choose between them.

“We mock at the Catholic bigots at Rome,  
Who strive with their dogmas, man’s reason to fetter ;  
We then turn to the Protestant bigots at home,  
To find that their dogmas are scarce a whit better.”

The Emperor Julian said : “ The savage beasts are not more formidable to men than the Christians are to each other, when they are divided by creed and opinion.”

“ Alike Papist and Protestant vote death and attainder to their conquered foes. The Churchman persecutes the Puritan ; the Puritan imprisons the Quaker ; and to-day, had he the power, the bigot would muzzle every voice and printing press that utters tenets different from his own.”—(F. Blanchard.)

Torquemada, in his bigotry and cruelty, in bringing so many to the rack and the stake, was not a whit worse than John Calvin in his fiendish treatment of Servetus, Castellio, Philipp, Ameault, Dubois, Gruet, Rolser, and hundreds of others, whose sole crime was that of differing in opinion from Calvin.

Brooke Adams, in his *Emancipation of Massachusetts*, gives a record of intolerance, of bigotry, of persecution, of cruelty and of death inflicted on innocent persons in the seventeenth century by the Puritans, only equalled by similar records in the days of the Inquisition.

Cardinal Newman speaks of the “ corrosive influence of reason.”

Rev. Dr. D. J. Burrill (Protestant) says : “ The false beacon of these days is progress.”

Bishop Spottswood (R. C.) says : “ I would that half the people of this nation should be brought to the stake and burnt, than that one man should read the Bible and form his own judgment from its contents.”

Spurgeon (Protestant) says : “ Could ye roll into one mass all sins ; could ye take murder, and everything that is vile, and unite them into one vast globe of black corruption, they

would not equal the sin of unbelief. This is the monarch sin ; the quintessence of all guilt ; the mixture of the venom of all crimes.”

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of St. Louis says : “ Heresy and unbelief are crimes, and are punished like other crimes in Catholic countries.”

Rev. Dr. Dowling (Protestant) in the *Christian Intelligencer* of May 8, 1889, broadly intimates that he who differs in opinion from him is an “ intellectual and moral monstrosity.”

The *Catholic Banner* says : “ What a day of pleasure will that be for us, when we see anti-clericals writhing in the flames of the Inquisition.”

The *St. Andrew's Cross* says : “ You must not blame some of us if we sometimes think that a cool cell in a comfortable jail, with a very abstemious diet, would be a well-earned reward for some of this loud-mouthed antichristian writing and teaching.”

The *Catholic Mirror* says : “ Impudent sects of heretics, infidels, atheists, claim to be treated by States on an equal footing with the one true Church ! How shall we view this deplorable and perplexing problem ? ”

Rev. Dr. Alfred Niven, of Philadelphia, says : “ People are led to believe that the doctrines of Christianity are open questions, which admit of discussion.”

“ That pest of all others, most to be avoided, in a State, unbridled liberty of opinion.”—(Pius IX.)

“ I have an absolute hatred of advanced thought.”—(Spurgeon.)

Father Ignatius says : “ Virtue is safe only when it rests on religion ; religion is safe only when it rests on dogma ; dogma is safe only when it rests on the authority of the Church.”

The *Chicago Evening Journal* says : “ An immoral and lawless man, even a criminal, if he has a theoretical belief in God, is a good man and a valuable member of society, as compared with the Infidel, however pure his life.”

The *Western Watchman* (R. C.) says : “ Protestantism ! we would draw and quarter it ; we would impale it and hang it up

for crow's nests ; we would tear it with pincers and fire it with hot irons ; we would fill it with molten lead, and sink it in hell-fire a hundred fathoms deep."

The *Methodist Recorder* says : "Agnosticism ! it is as ignominious as the atheism of Democritus ; more harmful than the idolatry of the Israelites, and more self-deteriorating than the profane impulses of the loathed profligate."

Cardinal Baronius says : "God has made political government subject to the dominion of the spiritual Roman Catholic Church."

At one time, in Vermont and in some other of the New England States, under Protestant control, no person was allowed to vote unless a member of the Protestant Church.

In 1700 a law was passed in this State condemning any popish priest to perpetual imprisonment, if found in the province ; while, if he escaped from jail, he was to be put to death.

"We ought to hold as a fixed principle, that what I see white, I believe to be black, if the superior authorities define it to be so."—(Ignatius de Loyola.)

"It is lawful to punish to the death such as labor to subvert the true religion."—(John Knox.)

Romanists and Protestants equally insist upon religious teachings in the public schools, notwithstanding that the majority of the parents of school-children are opposed to such teachings. President Seelye, of Amherst college, voices the sentiments of both sects, in saying that "the State must teach religion—if its subjects approve, well ; if not, the State must not falter."

The intolerant spirit which has shown itself in our Sunday laws, has resulted in denying to those who do not believe in Sunday observance the rights which every citizen should participate in. In Tennessee, in Maryland, and in other States, estimable people have been imprisoned, some of them for weeks, for simply attending to their own necessary duties on Sunday.

There is a (comparative) consistency in the utterances of the Romish Church, which boldly denies the right of private

judgment, and we need not, therefore, be surprised when we read such sayings as the following :

“The Church is certainly not tolerant in matters of doctrine. True, and we glory in it. . . . The freedom of thinking is simply nonsense.”—(Mgr. Segur.)

“We are not advocates of religious freedom, and we repeat we are not.”—(*The Shepherd of the Valley.*)

“Religious liberty is merely endured until the opposite can be carried into effect without peril to the Roman Catholic Church.”—(Bishop O'Connor.)

“The Protestant is bound to be liberal to Catholics ; but Catholics cannot be liberal to any party that rejects the Church.”—(*Tablet.*)

But a Church which came into being with the declaration of the right of private judgment, but which equally with the Romish Church denies it, is certainly inconsistent.

The Protestant President (Oakes) of Harvard College, in 1673, said : “I look upon toleration as the first-born of all abominations.”

The Episcopal Bishop (Seymour) of Illinois, says : “Men repudiate strict adherence to truth ; they explain away their pledges and promises ; evade their oaths by sophistry, and are thoroughly crafty and deceitful.” One might suppose this language addressed to what Christians call Infidels, but no, it is addressed to those of the same communion with the Bishop, but who happen to differ from him on some doctrinal point.

A Church of England clergyman, Rev. F. A. Grace, of Great Barling, Essex, has written a catechism in which is taught that “dissent is a great sin,” and that dissenters “worship God according to their own evil and corrupt imaginations, and therefore their worship is idolatrous.”

The *Christian Advocate* recently said : “It is impossible to teach morals properly, without accepting and recognizing the Christian religion as the only sufficient source and foundation of morality.”

This might be called a sufficiency of intolerant impudence.

But probably the most extreme exhibition of bigotry, the most sublime instance of unadulterated insolence, is to be found in the *North American Review* for January, 1893, is an article written by Rev. Leighton Colman, the Episcopal Bishop of Delaware. Two quotations may suffice, viz.: "He who denies the divinity of Christ, reduces Christianity to a system of willful deceit and shameless wickedness." (How are Christians of the Unitarian belief pleased with this?) "A man who is not a Christian cannot be accounted a moral man." (Listen to this, ye millions of upright, virtuous men and women of Hebrew, Agnostic, and other beliefs!)

Constantine suppressed the medical schools of the Saracens, because of the difference in religious belief.

Hon. Andrew D. White tells us that the Dominican Father Caccini insisted that "geometry is of the devil," and that "mathematics should be banished as the author of all heresies." The Church authorities gave Caccini promotion.

Father Inchofer declared that "argument against the immortality of the soul, the existence of God, the incarnation, should be tolerated, sooner than argument to prove that the earth moves."

Men of learning and character, two or three centuries ago, were driven from educational institutions, because of the then existing intolerance towards the Copernican system of astronomy. Precisely the same spirit is abroad to-day. Eminent men are now being driven from our universities, because of intolerance of the theory of evolution (a fact as well established as is the Copernican theory,) and other scientific discoveries. The expulsion of Prof. Winchell from the Chair of Geology at the Vanderbilt University, because he believed that man existed on the earth before the period assigned to Adam; of Prof. Woodrow from the Chair of Natural Science in a theological seminary at Columbia, S. C., because he believed in evolution; of Prof. Alexander from the State University of South Carolina, because he was unable to comprehend how three persons made one person, or one God; of Prof. Tay, from a Kentucky college, for accepting as facts the latest demonstrations

of science ; of several professors at the College of Beyrout, for, also, believing in the latest scientific discoveries ; are some of the recent instances of Protestant intolerance, which is worthy of the bigotry of the fifteenth century.

In the case of Prof. Woodrow, the persecution which he endured is a disgrace to the age in which we live. The Presbytery at Charleston adopted a resolution prohibiting any one in the Church from writing upon or criticising the decision of the General Assembly, which condemned Dr. Woodrow's teachings. In addition to this, Dr. W., who had become a professor in the University of South Carolina, was boycotted by the faculty ; the students being kept away from his lectures by being told that their support would be cut off if they attended the Professor's lectures.

Recently six ministers were expelled from the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Petersburg, Va., for insisting upon the exercise of their right to vote at state and national elections.

Three teachers in the Wilson Industrial School in New York City were recently discharged for holding what the managers regarded as heretical views on the question of Theosophy.

Two highly respectable and intelligent persons in Stockholm, Sweden, a short time since, were imprisoned, one for one month, and the other for three months, for expressing disbelief in the dogmas of orthodox Christianity.

In England, at the present time, legacies for diffusing Free-thought ideas can be confiscated.

In this country it is doubtful if any will making bequests for similar purposes could stand, if the decision rests with a judge who is a church-member. In the Girard will case, Judge Story, while rendering no decision on the point, broadly intimates that funds could not be legally left for the dissemination of any opinion in opposition to those of Christianity. He says : " It is unnecessary to consider what would be the legal effect of a decision for the establishment of a school for the propagation of *Judaism*, or Deism, or *any other* form of *Infidelity*."

The spirit of three centuries ago, which persecuted, tortured, and murdered that greatest scholar of his day, Bruno, still lives in the "Vicar of Christ" (!) at Rome, as appears in the allocution of the present Pope, defending that inhuman act.

There is to-day the same spirit among Christians which forced Roger Williams to seek the protection of the supposed savage, but humane, Massasoit, from the persecutions of a Christian sect; which lodged in jail in Culpepper County, Va., Baptist ministers for preaching immersion; which brought the charge of blasphemy against Chevalier de la Barre, in 1676, for not having removed his hat on the passing of a religious procession, resulting in the most inhuman and excruciating torture and death; which, in 1812, sent Daniel Isaac Eaton to prison for eighteen months for publishing the "*Age of Reason*;" which imprisoned the venerable Abner Kneeland in 1835, for differing from the orthodox on the question of Universalism.

Human nature has been very much the same in all ages of the world, and there is scarcely a doubt that the intolerance of a few hundred years ago would again be rampant in our midst, if only the religious zealots had the power they formerly had. Is it unlikely that such bigots as the President of Amherst College, as the Bishop of Delaware, as the editor of the *Christian Advocate*, would add to their intolerant utterances acts of persecution, of cruelty and of murder, similar to those which so long stained the pages of Christian history, if only they were sustained by the same public sentiment by which the atrocities of the Church in the centuries that are past were made possible? By no means. President Seelye and the rest are no more human, or humane, than were the bigots of former times.

It was public sentiment which sustained prominent and gifted men, like Sir Matthew Hale and Cotton Mather and John Wesley, in encouraging the torture and death of innocent women, because in the Christian's Bible the command is given, "Thou shalt not permit a witch to live."

"In the name of God every possible crime has been com-

mitted, every conceivable outrage perpetrated. Brave men, loving women, beautiful girls and prattling babes, have been exterminated in the name of Jesus Christ. For more than fifty generations the Church has carried the black flag. Her vengeance has been measured only by her power. With the heart of a fiend she has hated. With the clutch of avarice she has grasped. Pitiless as famine, merciless as fire. Such is the history of the Church of God.”

Fiendish as have been the acts which Col. Ingersoll, as above, has portrayed, they would be re-enacted to-day by the adherents of Christianity—Protestant and Catholic alike—under circumstances similar to those which hitherto existed; for religion not only enslaves the mind, but it makes captive the heart as well.

An instance in my own experience may illustrate this. I recently met a lady, a Christian, a person of unusual natural graces of character; gentle, kindly, intelligent; whose acquaintance I first made about forty years ago. It gave me great pleasure to meet again this friend of former years. The conversation which followed was most agreeable, until it turned upon religion, and almost instantly she assumed an entirely new character; becoming harsh, bitter, censorious, uncharitable, intolerant, unreasoning, unjust; revealing a most complete *change of nature*.

Had I defended vice and denounced virtue, she could not have animadverted more severely on my opinions; had I been guilty of every known crime, she could scarcely have been more acrimonious. In vain I claimed what seemed to me the reasonable right to do my own thinking (and accorded, of course, the same right to her), and insisted that no good reason existed why I should accept the conclusions of others (who had no more *knowledge* on the subject of religion than I had, no matter how much they *claimed* to know). In vain I pleaded that I was actuated by as high and as pure motives as anyone could possibly be, and that as she acted on what she regarded as her conscientious duty, so I was but following the dictates of my own conscience in asserting and acting upon



the views I had expressed, and that it was an utter impossibility for me—as an honest person, as true to conviction—to do otherwise. But all to no purpose. Her natural kindness of heart, her amiable qualities, as well as her good sense, were all sunk—deeply sunk—in her unyielding intolerance. How true, I thought then, were the lines quoted at the beginning of this article: “This is the way religion succeeded in closing the heart.”

There is no objection whatever to Christian people believing in a place of eternal punishment, in a blissful heaven, in a personal Devil, in a God (even of such imperfections as the Bible represents), in angels who have not fallen, as well as in those who have, in the story of creation, in miracles, in an infallible Church, a divinely ordained ministry, in an inspired book, or in aught else that is unprovable or improbable; these are mere matters of opinion, and any one who *can* so believe, is unquestionably entitled to such belief; but where the intolerance shows itself is in asserting that such belief is necessarily meritorious, and that those who do not so believe are necessarily immoral and criminal; utterly ignoring the fact that belief is involuntary, that it is impossible for any one to believe unless convinced, by reason, of the truth of such belief.

But as orthodox Christianity is never likely to relinquish its dogmatic, pharisaical, unreasoning, unjust and intolerant position, every indication of the disintegration or decay of the Christian religion should be hailed with delight by all who believe in the fullest tolerance of opinion, by all lovers of mental liberty.

## RELIGION.

“In religion,  
What damned error.”

—*Merchant of Venice*, iii, 2.

THERE is no necessary connection between the etymology of the word religion and the use it has been put to. It is derived from two Latin words, *re* and *ligo*, signifying to bind back. The latter Latin word is that from which the words ligature and ligament (binding together) are derived. So that its original meaning suggests association, compact, fraternity; not necessarily in matters of belief in certain creeds, but in *any* effort for good (or perhaps even for evil). Religion, as generally understood, lacks the essential element which the derivation of the word suggests and indicates. It does *not* bind heart to heart in the great brotherhood of mankind, in any *comprehensive* sense. As “Vindex” in *October Magazine*) says: “Religion is no bond of union, except between the members of a sect who all agree upon a dogmatic creed and form of worship.” Associations, such, for instance, as Prof. Felix Adler’s “Society for Ethical Culture,” or the “Manhattan Liberal Club,” are quite as truly religious as are Christianity or Buddhism. None of the believers in what are designated as the religions of the world, at least none of the “great” religions recognize this fact. They assume that there cannot be any religion unless it declares certain tenets which all who subscribe to are expected to accept with

“Unquestioned faith—unvitalized by thought.”

Such tenets are with reference to matters about which it is utterly impossible to ascertain anything, and yet the adherents

of such religions have the same implicit belief in them<sup>t</sup> as though they were demonstrated facts.

“All faiths are to their own believers just.”

Every religion is the result of environment and instruction. We take to our religion just as we adopt the customs and habits which prevail in the different countries in which our lot is cast. Gibbon says that “religion is a mere question of geography.”

There is no religion but what is founded in superstition, with an understratum of ignorance.

“The germ of all religions may be traced to human ignorance.”—(Ingersoll.)

Superstition encourages fear, and the priesthood of every religion make the most of the ignorance and fear and credulity of those over whom these religious teachers are placed.

“By education most have been misled;  
We so believe because we so are bred;  
The priest continues what the nurse began,  
And thus the boy imposes on the man.”—(Dryden.)

According to the late Rev. Roswell D. Hitchcock, D. D., there are one thousand religions in the world, every one of them teaching entirely different beliefs from the others, so that if one be true, then nine hundred and ninety-nine are (more or less) false; and yet there is a similarity between them. They all, or nearly all, profess belief in an (unknowable) God, and an (also unknowable) future state. But these beliefs must be subdivided, for there are believers in a God of personality, in a God of immanence, in a God of transcendence, and there is no harmony whatever in these respective beliefs. There are also believers in an eternal future, where the few pass to glory and happiness, and the many to misery and despair; in a modified future state, where punishment is limited; in universal salvation; in Nirvana, or an eternal sleep; in the transmigration of human souls to other human beings, and to lower animals. There are worshippers of the “sun-hero,” of the

“moon-goddess,” of the four winds, of the cow, the crocodile, the snake, and of almost every other conceivable object of worship. There are Monotheists, Ditheists, Tritheists, Polytheists, Pantheists, Henotheists, Theanthropists, Spiritists, Quetists, and, in fine, every other variety of belief in *super-naturalism*, *preter-naturalism*, and *un-naturalism*.

There can, of course, be no consensus of opinion among the adherents of such extremely divergent beliefs.

A Chinese proverb says: “Religions are various, but reason is one, and we are all brothers.”

Some one has said :

“Religions are opinions—*prove* but *one*,  
And all men mingle in a common faith.”

The intolerance manifested by the believers in the different religions, was aptly portrayed by the imaginary conference described in “*Volney's Ruins*,” and is confirmed by the actual conference of the recent Congress of Religions at Chicago. In both the imaginary and actual congress is shown the persistence of each in the peculiar tenets of their respective religions. Each religion claims for itself entire truth, and for those who differ from it entire falsity. The Congress of Religions at Chicago has undoubtedly been productive of much good. It has shown to the adherents of the prevailing religion in this country—what they seemed to be utterly ignorant of before—that there is as much sincerity, as much honesty, as much morality, as much humanity, as much loving-kindness, and, indeed (if they are candid enough to admit it), as much truth, in every other religion, as there is in Christianity. Indeed, if Christians make a study of comparative religions, they will find that their religion lacks many of the features which make many other religions attractive. Certainly Christianity has been more intolerant, persecuting and cruel, than any religion which ever existed. So far from its being a religion of love, it has been one of hate. So far from its having been an aid to civilization and literature and science, it has been their most inveterate foe.

Hon. Andrew D. White tells us how the Catholic universities of Europe excluded the Copernican and Newtonian demonstrations, and how “down to the present time the two great universities of Protestant England, and nearly all of her intermediate colleges, under clerical supervision, have excluded the natural and physical sciences as far as possible,” and “how the most careful modern thought is also excluded from probably *nine-tenths* of the universities and colleges of the *United States*.”

Christianity is the most narrow-minded, self-righteous, exclusive, and assertive, of all the religions of the world. While other religions, or many of them, are catholic in spirit, Christianity seems to pride itself in inculcating those precepts of the Bible which are found in passages which tell of the “few that are chosen,” of the “narrow path,” of the “straight gate,” and other quotations in so constant use by the pharisaical sect.

Comparison with other religions shows the spirit of Christianity in its true light. Compare it, for instance, with Buddhism.

Says Sir Lepel Griffin : “How poorly do the results of Christianity show by the side of even a negative creed like Buddhism.”

“Buddhism owes its success to its catholic spirit, and its beautiful morality.”—(Winwood Reade.)

“If ever beat upon this earth a heart which knew no bounds, it was that of Gautama, and his spirit has been that of his followers.”—(Rev. John W. Chadwick.)

“Buddhism never persecuted for opinion’s sake, never shed one drop of human blood.”—Moncure D. Conway.)

“No Buddhist ever burned a fellow-being for heresy.”—(Rev. Theo. L. Williams.)

In comparing Christianity with Mohammedanism, we have the following testimony. Canon Taylor, of the Church of England, says : “Islamism has done more for civilization than Christianity has done or can do. Islamism is the most powerful total abstinence association in the world, whereas the ex-

tension of European trade means the extension of drunkenness and vice, and the degradation of the people. Islam introduces a knowledge of reading and writing, decent clothing, personal cleanliness, veracity, and self-respect. Its restraining and civilizing effects are marvelous. How little have we to show for the vast sums of money, and all the precious lives lavished upon Africa. Christian converts are recorded by thousands, Moslem converts by *millions*."

"While the Christians in Europe were groveling in the utmost ignorance, holding fanatically to a geocentric and flat-earth theory, the learned Saracens declared the world to be round, translated the writings of the Greek philosophers, encouraged the study of law, medicine, chemistry, geometry and astronomy, and established schools, hospitals and libraries."—(Herbert Junius Hardwicke, M. D., F. R. C. S.)

"When Omar captured Jerusalem (637), every Christian life was spared. When Godfrey seized the Holy City, ten thousand Moslems were cruelly put to death."—(Ibu Ishak, *Arena*, September, 1892.)

The discredit of destroying the Alexandrian libraries has usually been attributed to Mohammedanism. They *were* so destroyed in 640. But the *Christians set the example* by destroying one of them in 390.

T. W. Higginson tells us that a philanthropist goes to England to implore Christians not to teach young Hindoos the use of strong drink; and that in China "men interrupt the missionaries by asking them why, if these doctrines be true, a Christian nation forced opium upon a Pagan Emperor."

Archdeacon Farrar says that "where the English have made one convert to Christianity, they have made one hundred drunkards."

The *Christian-at-Work* says that where there has been *one* Christian convert, *two hundred* have become addicted to the opium habit.

Rev. A. H. Lewis, D. D., says: "When Pagans are told that England and the United States are "Christian" nations, they naturally conclude that whatever comes to them from

these Christian lands represents Christianity. What wonder, then, that intelligent men refuse to accept a religion which forces the opium trade on China, and the rum traffic on Africa and elsewhere, under Christian flags, which carry now and then a stray missionary along with thousands of rum casks, and hundreds of drunken, licentious, Christian sailors, who go ashore to 'paint red' pagan cities, and indulge their beastly passions."

O. D. Janes, in the *American Non-Conformist*, says: "The Church of England is an aristocracy that goes all over the world with the Bible in one hand, a sword in the other, and a baggage-train of opium and whisky."

What can the disciples of Confucius think of Christianity, when a so-called Christian nation violates its treaties, and enacts the most unneighborly, unbrotherly, unjust, unfeeling and uncivilized laws for the purpose of excluding from our shores some of the most peaceful, sober and industrious people of the globe; and in which nations thousands of these unoffending Chinese have been most cruelly persecuted, and most brutally murdered. The misrepresentations made by Christians with regard to other religions, have received a decided check and a just rebuke, during the recent Congress of Religions at Chicago. As instances, the Buddhist priest, who there spoke, says: "The story of Juggernaut, which Christian missionaries have, for so many years, retailed to their brethren at home, has no foundation whatever, in fact. A committee, composed of eminent Englishmen, has declared the Christian idea of Juggernaut a *myth*. Death and blood are repulsive to our people. This Christian story is exploded and gone into oblivion."

Every Christian pulpit orator rises to unusual heights of eloquent indignation, condemnation and vituperation, in picturing to his credulous hearers the worship of images, the "bowing down to stocks and to stones" of the "heathen" Hindoo. In answer to this Christian calumny, hear what Vivekananda, a representative of Brahmanism (at the Congress of Religions), says: "No Indian idolator, as such, believes the piece of

stone, metal or wood, before his eyes, to be his God in any sense of the word. He takes it only as a *symbol* of the all-pervading *Goodhead* and uses it as a convenient object for purposes of concentration, which being accomplished, he does not hesitate to throw it away."

As illustrating the trouble, in foreign countries, caused by Christian missionaries, Bishop Shibata, of the Shinto sect from Japan, said: "In 1837 the Christian missionaries combined with their converts and caused a tragic and bloody rebellion against the country. . . . Christianity has brought riot and bloodshed in its train. Verily, it has brought, instead of peace, a sword."

The *New York Herald*, in giving an account of the above speech, adds: "It was then that the audience of four thousand men and women—most of them Christians—rose to their feet and cried, 'Shame, shame upon the missionaries.'"

This same audience was much moved by Mozoomdar, a Hindoo, who spoke of the beautiful humanity, the noble faith and gentle practices of the great sect to which he belonged. The newspaper reporter in closing an account of this speech, says: "The truth and beauty which he embodied in religions, heretofore practically unknown to the mass of Christendom, were laid bare to wondering, and almost reverential, eyes."

The *American Sentinel* says of the Congress, that "it will certainly have a tendency to create the impression that one religion is about as good as another. Indeed it has done something in this direction already."

The Protestant says the Romanist is superstitious, because the latter worships the "Virgin Mary," bows to the crucifix and performs other irrational acts of devotion. The Romanist says the heathen are superstitious, because they worship other images. There is scarcely any difference between the superstitions of either of these classes of worshipers; the worship of one is equally as absurd as that of the other. The Protestant belief in a God of personality, or rather in *three* personalities; with the human, or rather inhuman, frailties which the Bible



attributes to God ; in a personalty, also, of evil ; in endless torture ; are superstitions *quite* as much opposed to intelligent thought as are those of any other religionist in any part of the globe.

There is certainly little to choose, so far as the theology of the different religions are concerned, while the moral code, and the precepts in support of it, are found to be almost identical in every religion.

The great religions of the world differ in degree only, not in kind. . . . There is not a lofty sentiment or a noble aspiration in the Bible which cannot be paralleled in the religious literature of China or India or Persia or Egypt or Greece or Rome.”—Rev. John W. Chadwick.)

Buddha, Confucius, Lao-tse, Mencius, Zoroaster, Manu, and others, who lived, many of them centuries before Christ, taught the same moral precepts that Christ did.

“Do not to others what you would not that men should do to you.”—(Hillel.)

“Return good for evil.”—(Brahmin Text.)

“Whatever people may think of you, do that which you believe to be right.”—(Pythagoras.)

“Overcome evil by good.”—(Buddhist Precept.)

“He is the greatest man who patiently endures injury.”—(Confucius.)

“Loving compassion is the noblest of qualities.”—(Lao-tse.)

“Keep pure in body and mind.”—(Zoroaster.)

“Holiness is the best of all good.”—(The Avesta.)

“A man who foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of an ungrudging love.”—(The Tripitaka.)

“Nothing is nobler than high-mindedness and gentleness and philanthropy and doing good.”—(Epictetus.)

Max Müller says : “There is no religion which does not say, ‘do good and avoid evil.’”

The *Chicago Times* recently said : “The morals of civilization are not at all based on religion, certainly not on Christianity, since the so-called ‘golden rule’—the highest principle of morality—antedates Christianity a thousand years.”

This saying is well exemplified in the lives, at least, of Seneca, Pliny, Tacitus, Plutarch, Galen and Marcus Aurelius.

It is claimed for Christianity that it is an original religion. On the contrary, its same beliefs, dogmas and teachings, its same rites, ceremonies and customs, are to be found in nearly every religion which preceded it. The myths of creation, the fall of man, the deluge, the tower of Babel, those relating to Samson, Jonah and Jacob, of parthenogenesis, anthromorphism, the trinity, the atonement, eternal punishment, resurrection, ascension, God, Satan, angels, devils, heaven, and hell, are every one of them inculcated in religions older than Christianity. All are the outgrowth of—or evolution from—what Christians call Pagan religions.

Says Rev. R. Heber Newton: "Tonsured head, and silvery bells, and swinging censer; Christmas and Easter festivals; the sacramental use of bread, and of water, and of wine; the sign of the Cross; Holy Madonna and Child; are all ancient, human institutions, rites and symbols. Scratch a Christian and you come upon a Pagan. Christianity is re-baptized Paganism."

"We find much Paganism, in Christianity, in its creed, practice and ceremonies."—(Rev. Lyman Abbott, D. D.)

St. Augustine says: "The same thing which is now called Christian religion, existed among the ancients."

Origen says: "Paganism and Christianity have a common origin, and are really one and the same religion."

"The grave-clothes of Paganism became the swaddling-wraps of Christianity . . . It (Christianity) administered on the estate of Paganism, and appropriated most of the property to its own use."—(Ingersoll.)

"There is not a rite, ceremony, or belief, we now practice, or profess, that cannot be traced to its origin in Chaldean idolatry, in Assyrian, Egyptian, or Roman mythology."—(Eckler, *Gibbon's Christianity*, p. 96.)

"The Christians of the second century adopted certain rites and ceremonies employed in what was known as the '*Heathen Mysteries*.'"—(Mosheim.)

One religion has evolved from another. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* says: "The religions of Asia and of Europe are the common offspring of one primitive religion."

Each new religion is a branch, so to speak, of the tree of some older religion. The Buddhist religion is a product of the Brahmanistic religion. Roman mythology was derived from that of Greece. Christianity grew out of Judaism. Mohammedanism is an offshoot of Christianity, at least to the extent that Moses and Christ are recognized as prophets in the Mohammedan belief. Mormonism is grafted upon Christianity.

. . . . "religions take their turns :  
'Twas Jove's—'tis Mahomet's—and other creeds  
Will rise with other years."—*Childe Harold*.

While some religions are more peaceful, tolerant, humane and loving than others, religion in general has not practised these virtues. The God of one religion being different, both in name and conception, from the God of every other religion, jealousy and rivalry is created among the various religions. Hence the persecutions and wars which have made the history of religion the saddest, the most cruel, and the bloodiest of all the histories of the world; for there is something in religion which seems to engender greater bitterness, to beget greater hatred, to stimulate to greater acts of cruelty, and to encourage greater sacrifice of human life, than is produced from any other single cause.

In Butler's *Hudibras* we read of

"Such as do build their faith upon  
The holy text of pike and gun;  
Decide all controversies by  
Infallible artillery;  
And from their doctrine orthodox,  
By apostolic blows and knocks,  
Call fire and sword and desolation  
A godly, thorough Reformation."

M. Babcock says that "religion has filled the world with contentions, quarrels, wars and bloodshed. . . . Men

have become deadly enemies to each other, when they should have remained friends and brothers. They have spilt each other's blood, mutilated each other's bodies, and made corpses of millions of their fellow-beings, while madly following the monsters of their own imagination, and have made demons of themselves. The worship of God has made devils of men."

Voltaire illustrates the same thought :

" Religions raging with inhuman zeal  
Nerves every arm and points the fatal steel :  
Whatever names divine the parties claim,  
In craft and fury they are all the same."

The inconsistency—the cruelty, credulity and absurdity—of religion may, also, be illustrated by the following lines :

" I see ten thousand men advance  
With musket, cannon, glave and lance :  
They fight until the soil is red  
And half have gone to meet the dead ;  
While in a village church not far away,  
I hear the austere, bearded, preacher say,  
' Poor mortals here below  
Praise God from whom all blessings flow.' "

When success had, at one time, attended one of the two Christian nations which were engaged in the fearful Franco-German conflict, a telegram, in substance, if not in the actual words, went from the Emperor William to the Empress Augusta :

" We laid ten thousand Frenchmen low ;  
Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

Can it be possible that praise can be tendered, by the intelligent and the humane, to a being who could, and yet did not, prevent the strife of armies, the clash of arms, the slaughter of innocent men, the moans of the dying, the shrieks of the maimed, the woe in homes, the tears of widows, the cries of orphans, the destruction of property, the distress of communities, the ruin of nations ?

Even in the enlightened *to-day* is being carried on the same fierce wars, the same frightful carnage, by Christians, Mohammedans, Hindoos, and other religious sects, and all with the same fanatical zeal, the same delusive superstition, the same ignorant faith. What wonder that religious people are more bitter, intolerant, persecuting and cruel than others, when they regard as authority the creeds in which they profess to believe. For example, take the revolting creed or doctrine formulated in the Westminster Confession of Faith. It has been repudiated by very many of the communion who apparently accept it, and it has forced from some of its more liberal and kindly members expressions of contempt and disgust. Rev. Dr. Parkhurst, of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church, in New York City, speaking of it, says: "It is a horrible doctrine."

Some one has said: "History shows that religion has been more relentless under the auspices of the Christian theology, than under those of all the other theologies of the world combined. . . . It is the only one in the universe cruel enough to burn a man to death for merely holding an opinion."

Shelley portrays it thus:

"Prolific fiend,  
Who peopled earth with demons, hell with men,  
And heaven with slaves."

But we are not left to the alternative of selecting *such* a religion, or of being altogether without one (*if* one is deemed necessary.) Even in the Bible, with all its unreasonable and inhuman teachings and doctrines, can be found *some* of the ingredients of a true religion. In the Epistle of James we read that "pure and undefiled religion is to visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, and to keep one's self unspotted from the world." How transcendently superior is this to the usual dogmas taught in orthodox churches. In the October number of the *Freethinker's Magazine*, "Vindex" says that "the Church *never was* Christian." No more truthful saying was ever uttered. Nothing (or *almost* nothing) *Christ-like*, is

taught from any of the so-called Christian pulpits. What *is* there taught is the theology founded—*not* by Christ, but by Paul, and the superstructure of which is the work of Athanasius, Augustine, Gregory “the Great,” John Calvin, Jonathan Edwards, Joseph Cook, and others of like sacerdotal fame?

Lincoln said that when he found a Church whose *only* creed was the “Golden Rule,” he would join that Church.

Professor Felix Adler has established just such a Church, or, rather, association, known as the “Society for Ethical Culture, in New York City,”

“A temple, neither pagod, mosque, nor church.”

Its only creed, or tenet, or teaching, is that of duty each to the other, and its only belief is in beneficence—in deeds of love. His audiences, every Sunday morning, are *far* in excess of *any* of the Christian churches. He represents the religion of Christ *far* more than does Cardinal Gibbons, Bishop Potter, Rev. John Hall, D. D., or any other representative of pseudo-Christianity. The congregations of these (falsely-called) Christian churches are in perfect similitude to that pharisaical sect which Christ so earnestly and so constantly rebuked. Rev. Carlos Martyn, D. D., says: “Pharisaism is resurrected and baptized with a Christian name.” It is these same Christian Pharisees who continually sneer at what they choose to call “*mere* morality.”

Bishop Latimer said: “Religion, pure religion, standeth not in the wearing of a monk’s cowl; but in *righteousness, justice and well-doing.*”

“The one religion, pure and perfect, is fidelity to all the relations in which we are placed to one another.”—(Rev. Dr. Furness.)

“True religion is a matter of heart and conduct.”—(Rev. Dr. Alfred Momerie.)

“There is but one religion—the religion of truth.”—(Dr. Paul Carus, President Congress of Religions.)

A religion that is broad, rational, practical, humane, en-

nobling, sympathetic, ethical, philanthropic, altruistic ; which substitutes *Amo* for *Credo* ; which subjects faith to reason ; which puts natural law in the place of miracle ; which subordinates tradition, legend and fable to history, reality and fact ; which regards *truth* as *authority* (and *not* "authority as truth ;") which disowns superstition and disclaims dogmatism ; which revolts at the suppression of inquiry ; which rejects the astronomical, geological and biological absurdities taught in the Book of Genesis ; but, rather, which invites investigation into every new avenue of thought, which is in harmony with the latest discoveries of science ; and which, in fine, insists upon, and will ever persist in demanding, the most comprehensive and complete mental freedom ; is a religion such as is in accord with the spirit of the age, and finds constantly increasing adherents among the intelligent, the benevolent, and the truth-loving. Such a religion finds expression in the lines of Pope :

"To no creed confined,  
The world our home, our brothers all mankind ;  
Do good, love truth, be just and fair withal ;  
Exalt the right—though every ism fall."

## RELIGION AND EDUCATION.

THERE seems to have been an opinion prevailing among past generations that religion was a necessary part of education. Such opinion is, however, gradually changing, under the influence of modern rational thought. It used to be considered that no person without the prefix of "Reverend" to his name was eligible to the presidency of any college. Now we have two colleges in New York City presided over by gentlemen who are not clergymen, and there are many other colleges in the country of which it is not thought necessary that a clerical should be at the head. Why should not such be the case? What has religion to do, necessarily, with education? What connection is there between religion and any of the primary, or of the higher, branches of education? Young people are not sent to school or to college to learn religion, but to be instructed in those branches of study which will enable them to acquire such knowledge as may be useful in the various avocations to which they may be called, and religion is entirely unnecessary to fit them for any of these avocations, except such as may be inclined to select the ministry as an occupation, and for all such there are theological institutions, where theology is taught as an entirely distinct and separate study.

Rudimentary education consists in the teaching of reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, etc. Why introduce religion into these studies? In the higher branches of mathematics, chemistry, astronomy, microscopy, literature, the languages, etc., why should religion be intruded into these studies? Religion is entirely irrelevant to *any* such



branches of study. There are schools for the teaching of penmanship, for the learning of trades; law and medical schools; business colleges; in none of which is religion taught, and what an absurdity the introduction of religion would be in connection with any such instructions. Rev. Howard Crosby, D. D., said that "we might as well insist on reading the Bible in a machine shop, as in a public school."

There *is* a proper place to teach religion, not in any school or college, the studies in which have no necessary connection whatever with religion; but religion (for those who desire it) should (only) be taught in the home, in the Sunday-school, or in the church.

We may not complain so much of the teaching of religion in schools and colleges, where we pay for our children's instruction in the various departments of learning, *knowing* that religion is there taught; though it is a great wrong to those who do not believe in the prevailing religion, that there are so few educational institutions where religion is not taught; but it certainly is the rankest injustice to compel us to pay (through the tax levy) for the support of schools, academies and colleges, in which is taught a religion that we may abhor. It is a violation of the great principle, which is the boast of our Republic, of equal rights and of exact justice to all; of our constitutional prerogative that we cannot be compelled to contribute to the support of any religion of which we do not approve; of that inestimable, wise and just claim, which so distinguishes us from almost every other nation, the utter and entire separation of Church and State.

The teaching of religion in the public schools and other institutions, under State support, is a wrong, which no consistent person, no one in whose character is the element of justice, no true patriot, can, for a moment, advocate or palliate.

It is not necessary to discuss the question as to whether religion has been, or has not been, a benefit to mankind. There are those who think in the affirmative, and those who think in the negative. It is sufficient to know that the latter class think so—and it may be added that it is a *very large*

class, and which class is entitled to all privileges and immunities which every other citizen is entitled to.

Religion was very properly—and designedly—omitted from any notice whatever in the formation of our Constitution, and in order to emphasize the idea of its disassociation with the State, the first of the constitutional amendments demands that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion.”

The Constitution of the State of New York, and of several other States, are also emphatic in enunciating the principle that religion is—and ever shall be—entirely separate and distinct from the State. And yet, in the face of these explicit declaration of both United States and State law, every one—including those who believe religion to have retarded civilization, suppressed learning and discountenanced science—is compelled to pay to the State his quota of what is taxed to support educational institutions, where a religion, which is repulsive to him, is taught.

This unjust system is advocated by those who (falsely) claim that there is no justice, no honor, no fidelity, no integrity, no purity, no truth, outside of the Christian Church.

Listen to what is said by ministers of righteousness (*but not of rightness*), by preachers of Godliness (*but not of goodness*), by teachers of the “Golden Rule” (*but who do not practice it*).

Bishop Chitard, of Vincennes, says: “Six hundred thousand pupils are now receiving instruction, at an expense to the (Catholic) Church of \$9,000,000 a year, and I demand that this \$9,000,000 should be paid by the State out of the money raised by taxation.” (!)

Archbishop Purcell says: “We cannot approve of that system of education for youth which is apart from instruction in the Catholic faith.” (!)

Pius IX. declares: “Education of children in a knowledge of natural things, apart from the Catholic faith, is a damnable heresy.” (!)

Bishop Gilmour, of Cleveland, Ohio, says: “We solemnly

charge and most positively require every Catholic to send his children to a Catholic school, and authorize confessors to refuse the sacraments to such parents as disobey." (!)

Other Roman Catholic utterances of similar intolerance, injustice, selfishness and self-righteousness, could be quoted. Another Romish Archbishop (Ireland) so insists upon the teaching of religion in the public schools, that he expressed himself as favoring the teaching of the *Protestant*—rather than no—religion. And a Protestant clergyman (Rev. Abbott E. Kittridge, of Chicago), has said that "if the position of the public school is to be . . . No Bible . . . then I stand with the Roman Catholics for religious schools."

Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, *of course*, insists upon religions teaching in the public schools. He demands that education *must* be supplemented with "the theology of the fall of man, the immortality of the soul, the judgment to come," etc.

Dr. Shearer, President of Davidson College, N. C., denounces the common school system of the country, advocating the education of children of Protestants in schools fostered by the Church (only).

Ex-President Woolsey, of Yale College, denied the right of the State to teach the discoveries of science, "if theism and revelation be banished from the scholastic halls," and adds, "why permit evolution to be publicly professed more than predestination?" (!)

The late Rev. A. A. Hodge, D. D., of Princeton Seminary, in insisting upon religious teaching in the public schools, says: "Christians have the power in their own hands. The danger arises simply from the weak and sickly sentimentally respecting . . . *the supposed equitable rights of an Infidel minority.*" (!)

President Seelye, of Amherst College (like Dr. Hodge), evidently is of the opinion that minorities have no rights which majorities are bound to respect. He says: "The State must teach religion. If the consciences of its subjects approve, well; if not the State must not falter. *Undoubtedly*, if the State enter upon the work of religious instruction, *the con-*

*sciences of some of its subjects might be invaded, but no wise government will let the consciences of its subjects control its public policy. . . , The question of conscience has no relevancy to the matter.” (! !)*

Prof. Noah K. Davis, of the University of Virginia, alluding to the above utterance of President Seelye, says : “ There is a breath of Torquemada in that. . . . What is a constitution, but an ægis of the minority, to shield them from tyranny of the majority? To the chivalric and just the feeble are sacred.”

Rev. Galusha Anderson, D. D., of Salem, Mass.—also in allusion to what President Seelye has said—remarks : “ This is the grim doctrine that fed, for years, the fires of Smithfield. *Conscience is a domain into which human governments have no right to intrude.* Can a State teach religion without striking down the rights of conscience? But, it is asked, ought not the State to compel the reading of the Bible—without note or comment—in its schools? To do this, when men are in conscience opposed to it, is to strike down, by the power of the State the doctrine of religious liberty for the establishment of which so many of our fathers poured out their blood like water.”

The *Day Star* says : “ Nine-tenths of all the blood and rapine, the murder and oppression, of the world, has been caused by the attempt to enforce just such doctrine as is advocated by Reverend Seelye ; than which nothing more atrocious could be devised. Rivers of blood have flowed because men loved truth and liberty better than life, and (because) the consciences of the ‘ subjects of the State ’ did *not* approve. The ashes of ‘ subjects ’ burned at the stake, because their consciences did not approve the edicts of the State, would fertilize the soil of a continent.”

Rev. Hillary Bygrave, of Toronto, says : “ It is doubtful if the children of schools are made wiser, more useful, or even more moral, by being compelled to read the Bible. I plead for freedom of conscience and equal rights for all, Catholic, Protestant, Jew, Chinese, Agnostic and Atheist, alike.”

At a conference of Baptist pastors in the State of New York, held March, 1890, it was *unanimously* resolved: "We believe that it is a manifest injustice to tax those who do not believe in religion, for the maintenance of schools in which are taught religious principles which they do not wish their children to learn. . . . The State should teach only that on which all are agreed, and should not invade matters of conscience."

The New York *World* thus expresses the true American idea on this question: "Ours is a purely secular State, in which men of all religions, and of no religion, are upon an exactly equal footing before the law. It has nothing whatever to do with creeds or religion. The public schools are maintained by the *secular* State, for the *secular* education of children; their religious education is a matter with which the State has no business to concern itself. That is a matter of parents and pastors. The State has no more right to teach a religion which is held by a majority of the people, than to teach one held by one of all its citizens."

"The American idea of the State is simple and consistent. . . . The State is absolutely secular, and must be so if we are to enforce the root principle of popular self-government, viz.: the absolute equality of all citizens before the law. Our population consists of Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Agnostics, Atheists, and men representing all other forms of thinking. All these are equally citizens; all have an equal right and part in the government. We raise the school fund by taxing *all* these, and we have no more right to tax the Jew to support a Christian school, or the Methodists to support a Catholic school, or the Catholics to support a Presbyterian school, than to reverse all these processes, or to build churches at State expense, or to pay priests and clergy out of the public treasury, or to force a religion upon the people by statute."—*(New York Commercial Advertiser.)*

"Nothing is more apparent than that the existence of the schools depends upon the *total* exclusion of religion from them."—*(New York Sun.)*

President Elliot, of Harvard University, has expressed himself in opposition to "imposing religious opinions upon the susceptible mind," not only in State education, but in *all our colleges and universities.*"

President James C. Welling, of the Columbian University of Washington, D. C., argues that "public education should be confined to that modicum which may be necessary for the common defense and general welfare," and in respect to which there is a consensus of opinion; his conclusions being, "the State cannot rightfully teach the tenets of any particular religious creed, whether it be Jewish or Christian, Agnostic or Atheistic. Public education, supported by public taxation, must needs be colorless in point of religion."

General Grant wrote: "No sectarian tenet should be taught in any school supported by State or National tax."

The late Rev. Howard Crosby, D. D., has said: "There is no safety for our country, but in non-religious elementary education in the public schools. If the State is to teach religion, what religion is it to furnish; the Roman Catholic, the Jewish, the Chinese, the Agnostic? Why not these? If the State must furnish religion, it must also logically furnish the inquisition, and so the foundation of American independence must be destroyed. *Is it not better that the Atheist should make his children Atheists, than to break up the country and array men against each other?*"

Rev. Dr. Tiffany, who was a listener to the foregoing, gave it his unqualified approval.

*The Christian at Work* says: "We cannot, as a people, too strongly insist that religion in the public schools shall not be taught, against the opposition of those who support the schools. . . . Reading a Protestant portion of the Bible is sectarian, as against the Douay or Roman Catholic version."

Dr. J. G. Holland, in *Scribners*, February, 1876, speaking of the compulsory reading of the Bible in the public schools, says: "It is to the Catholic, Jew, and Atheists, a grievance, a hardship, an oppression."

Rev. Dr. W. S. Crowe, of Newark, says: "As a nation we

are not Christian. We are nothing, theologically. The nation has no creeds. Your State, or your city, because the majority of the people happen to be Protestant, has therefore, no right to force Bible-reading into the public school, if there be one single Hebrew, one single Atheist, one single Catholic, who objects to it. If the parents of one single child objects, then your Bible-reading becomes a tyranny."

Hon. A. S. Draper, late Superintendent of Public Instruction, says: "When any objection to the Bible in public schools is made, the only just course is to take it out."

"The Superintendents of Public Instruction, including Hon. John A. Dix, have, for fifty years, held that religious instruction should form no part of the public school exercises."—(*Truth-Seeker.*)

The *Albany Law Journal* says: "The State has no more right to permit the reading of the Bible in the public schools, than to permit the reading of the 'Westminster Catechism,' the 'Book of Common Prayer,' or the 'Talmud.'"

The *New York Independent*, in quoting the above, says: "This is putting the matter in a plain, simple, and true light. The only just solution of the school question is to confine instruction in the public schools to purely *secular* education, and leave religious education to the family and the Church. Catholics, Protestants, and Infidels, should be able to agree to this course. It is all nonsense to say that the public school is 'godless.'"

Rev. Dr. S. H. Greer, of St. Bartholomew Church, New York City, has expressed himself as opposed to allowing the Bible to be read in the public schools, and added: "The charge that the schools of to-day are godless, is largely rhetorical."

Rev. Dr. H. G. Jackson (Methodist) says: "It is not fair to require the Jews, or those of some other faith that are not Christians, to read the scriptures. The question arises—if you read the Bible in the public schools—what Bible? King James' is the Protestant Bible, and the Douay the Roman Catholic. . . . What we call morality can be

taught without the use of the Bible. The State has nothing to do with religion."

Rev. Robert S. MacArthur (Baptist) says: "Should Romanism ever become dominant in this land, Protestants would make a great outcry if the Romish version of the Bible was forced upon the children in the schools. We can never properly antagonize them until we become entirely willing to omit all forms of distinctively religious teaching in the public schools. Further, we have no right to subject Atheists to taxation for the support of schools in which Christianity is taught. The teaching of religion belongs to the family and to the church."

Rev. Charles H. Eaton (pastor of the Church of the Divine Paternity, New York City), says: "We would remove from the public schools the Bible), and take away *all* religious exercises, and make the public schools what they were intended to be—the foundation and beginning of knowledge, which shall be the best protection of the American Republic."

"The reading of the Bible in the public schools is a good deal of a 'performance,' and is conspicuous for nothing so much as for its *farcical* features. It is more a 'fetich' than a moral agency."—(Rev. Dr. Parkhurst.)

"Protestants are wrong in claiming a right to have the Bible read as a religious book. This branch of education should be relegated, where it belongs, to the family and the church."—Rev. Dr. Shipman, Christ Church, New York City.)

"I object to the Bible being read in the public schools:

"1. Because there is no common agreement as to what constitutes the Bible.

"2. Because there is no common agreement as to what parts are historical, and what parts are allegorical.

"3. Because there is no common agreement as to what doctrines are taught in the Bible.

"4. Because it contains so much that is cruel and obscene.

"5. Because the moral is so mixed up with the immoral, that there is great danger of contamination by contact.



“6. Because of its defective morality.”—(Judge Richard B. Westbrook, of Philadelphia.)

That true patriotic and fearless son of the “Mother Church,” Rev. Dr. McGlynn, thus expresses himself on this question: “We do not wish to unite secular and religious education. Our public schools are the pride and glory of Americans, and should be made institutions where Christians and Infidels, Jews and Gentiles, may alike send their children to be educated, without any fear that they would be subjected to any religious or sectarian bias. An Infidel, Jew, or Mohammedan, has the same right in our government, that you or I have, and the right of all should be respected. The business of public instruction should be in the hands of secular, and not entrusted to religious orders. . . . Is there any reason why there should be, in the common schools, anything to offend Hebrews Catholics, Agnostics, or Atheists? Protestants are setting a bad example, for the time may come when Hebrews or Catholics may be in the majority, and then they will make the schools Hebrew or Catholic.”

The question of the Bible in the public schools is not a religious one, but one of principle. Most of the utterances quoted above—as opposing any religious teaching or inculcation—are from clergymen and other professors of religion.

Why is it that the Romanists (or many of them) are clamoring for a portion of the school fund, with which to endow their parochial schools? Because they claim that the Protestants (being in the majority) have persisted in reading the Protestant Bible, and thereby inculcating the Protestant religion in the public schools; consequently they claim (and justly, too), that, as the State funds are thus appropriated to the inculcation or teaching of the Protestant religion, they (the Romanists) are equally entitled to a portion of the State funds for the support of schools where the Douay Bible is read, and, thereby, the Catholic religion is taught.

This subject has agitated the country for a half century or more. It has ever been a “bone of contention”—especially in this State—from the time Mr. Seward was governor. He

had the courage of his convictions in sustaining the position of Archbishop Hughes, who insisted that the Bible should be taken from the public schools. Governor Seward was denounced at that time by nearly all—if not quite all—of the Protestant clergy. He simply contended for the principle that no semblance of religious teaching should be permitted in the public schools, and that, consequently, *the reading of the Protestant Bible* was an improper and unjust act.

If the Romanists are successful in obtaining public funds for the parochial schools, *the Protestant Church is responsible for it*. If our (admirable) school system is destroyed, if the principle of secular education is abandoned, if these nurseries of citizenship are broken up, the Protestant Church must be held answerable for the calamity which will surely ensue. The same unprofitable contention (with regard to Bible-reading) has been going on for fifty years in the London school board.

As indicating the determination and bitterness of Romanists, with regard to the reading of the Bible in the public schools, a quotation from the *New York Catholic News* may be given, viz.: "The only claim Protestantism has on the country, is that it intruded itself here after the continent had been discovered by Catholics, and immediately began by persecuting them. An American Protestant has the same right as an American Mohammedan or Hebrew—but no more. And when he undertakes to impose his King James' (Lion and Unicorn) English Bible, he will find that American Catholics will not tolerate his intolerance. *The Protestant Bible*, in the public schools, for the support of which Catholics pay taxes, *must go*."

Some progress has been made towards ridding communities of the annoyances arising from the agitation of this vexed question. Religious exercises, of *any* description, have been forbidden in the common schools of the cities of Troy, Rochester, Cincinnati, and Chicago, and great efforts are being made in the same direction in other places."

In most States, the question of Bible-reading is left to the direction of the school commissioners, or to the teachers, but

we are happy to say that the constitution of one State, at least, viz.: Washington, forbids the reading of the Bible entirely within the schools under the jurisdiction of the State.

The following utterance of a judge of the Supreme Court of Wisconsin, before which came the question of the Bible in the public schools, indicates the rancor which this question engenders: "There is no such cause and source of strife, quarrel, fight, malignant opposition, persecution and war, as religion.

Let it once enter into our common schools, they would be destroyed; let it once enter into our civil affairs, our government would be destroyed."

Appropriation of money for schools, in which the reading of the Bible is insisted upon, is in direct violation of the following provision of law: "No school shall be entitled to receive any portion of the school money, in which the religious doctrines or tenets of any Christian or other religious sect shall be *taught, inculcated or practiced.*"

In conclusion, in view of the wrongful position assumed by those who persist in Bible-reading, or other religious instruction, in our public schools, the following questions would seem to be proper and pertinent, viz.: When will Christians (as a body) act upon principle? When will they be just? When will they do to others as they would that others should do to them? When will they render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsars? When will they recognize the rights of minorities? When will they respect the consciences of those who differ from them in opinion? When will they cease assuming superiority in wisdom, in knowledge, in morality, in uprightness? When will they be humble-minded, simple-hearted, kindly-disposed, forbearing, tolerant, to those who may not happen to think as they do? In fine, *when will Christians become Christ-like?*

## MENTAL EMANCIPATION.

“He who dares not reason is a slave.”—*Milton*.

“He is most enslaved who is so in his understanding.”—*Locke*.

IN a walk with my intimate friend, the late General Joseph Karge, Professor of Continental Languages in Princeton College, after expressing my doubts with regard to the authority and truthfulness of the Bible and my disbelief in the miracles therein narrated, he turned to me and said :

“Why, you are *emancipated*.”

This was many years ago, but the expression lingers on my memory as scarcely any other saying of anyone does. It expresses the true condition of mind of a person who has the courage to express his honest convictions ; who dares to exercise his reasoning faculties ; who has thrown off the shackles of dogmatism ; who has brushed away the cobwebs of superstition and who welcomes the light of truth which the revelations of science has caused to shine upon and to dissipate the *pretended* revelations of a so-called sacred book.

Emancipated ! That is the word which is properly applied to the independent thinkers, to the investigators for truth, to those who, like Copernicus and Newton and Darwin, study the laws of Nature rather than give credence to the supposed violations of those laws, which an unreasoning theology teaches.

Slavery in our southern states was thought by some to be a divine institution and a blessing to the enslaved, and so there are those who think that the church is *another* “divine institution,” and that the slavery of the mind is a blessing to those who are without inclination to inquire into the truth or falsehood of the theology which holds the relation of slave-master to the mentally enslaved.

As Buckle has said “the injury which the theological

principle has done to the world is immense. It has prevented men from studying the laws of nature."

How many intelligent minds (to say nothing of the more ignorant) are there which are in mental servitude to the superstitious fears which are generated by the horrible doctrines of orthodox Christianity? Rev. R. Heber Newton says: "Men in ever increasing numbers are exiling themselves from the homes of their fathers because the priesthood of Rome and of Protestantism allow *no freedom* of thought and speech in the ancestral mansions, but only the *slavery of superstition* or the silence of cowardice."

John Morley has expressed this servitude to religious fear, thus: "Those who dwell in the tower of ancient faiths look about them in one constant apprehension, misgiving and wonder; with the hurried, uneasy mien of people living among earthquakes."

It is this superstitious fear which enslaves the intellect and prevents the exercise of its legitimate functions. It is this which has retarded the advance of learning, and consequently encouraged ignorance; which has treated the investigations of science as though they were criminal acts; which has hindered the march of civilization, and which has checked the progress of what the Christian church sneeringly calls "mere morality."

The despotic power of Christianity, from the time that it became ascendant in the fourth century, held Grecian philosophy in vassalage, until in the sixth century, by Imperial Mandate, was closed the *last* of the schools of Greek philosophy.

The Church has been (and is to-day) a brake on the wheels of progress, an incubus on civilization, the preservator of antique ignorance, the store-house of foolish superstitions." Rev. John W. Chadwick says: "It is horrible to think how the path of science has been blocked, at every turn, by antiquated texts and from what possible advances we have been deterred by the dogma of Biblical infallibility, wedged into every avenue of scientific observation and experiments."

This superstitious fear has incited to intense bitterness, animosity and hatred; induced the practice of the most barbaric cruelty and occasioned the fiercest and bloodiest of wars. And all these horrors in the name of a religion *professedly* of "peace and good will to man." What inconsistency!

Since Christianity allied itself to the State under the inhuman monster, Constantine (whom Christians seem to delight to honor by calling "the Great") there has been more persecution, torture and slaughter of human beings than ever existed for all the ages prior to that most unfortunate period.

Christianity is the most inconsistent of all religions; for while it *professes* to be controlled by a broad and catholic love towards the whole human race, in its *practice* it is narrow-minded, exclusive, intolerant and revengeful. But while this is true of Christianity in general, embracing both Romanism and Protestantism, the latter is even more inconsistent than the former. Martin Luther was supposed to have struck a sturdy blow for intellectual freedom when he enunciated the right of private judgment. Upon this right was the Protestant Church founded, but which right is quite as much denied to-day in the Protestant as it is in the Romish Church. This fact is well expressed by N. A. Nolin (a Roman Catholic) in a recent number of the *N. A. Review*. In speaking of the conviction of Dr. Briggs for heresy by the Presbyterian General Assembly, he says: "We have before us a minister of the Gospel, belonging to a Church, which holds as one of its essential tenets that all its members—shepherd and flock—are vested with the unlimited right to interpret the Bible in the manner which to them seems good and proper. On a certain day in which he set forth his own interpretation of the divine word, he is dragged from one tribunal to another, eventually condemned and suspended as guilty of heresy! Dr. Briggs may well wonder at the course followed by his self-appointed judges and exclaim, 'Consistency, thou art a jewel!'"

In *both* churches we find the same slavery to ecclesiastical despotism, the same restraint of mental liberty.

This denial of the right of private judgment is not only anti-Protestant, but it is anti-Christian. It is opposed to the teachings of Paul, who tells us to "*prove* all things ;" certainly it is not in accord with the precept of the founder of Christianity, when he says : "Why judge ye not of *yourselves* what is right?"

The Protestant Church *pretends* (notwithstanding evidence to the contrary) to grant this right of private judgment to its adherents ; but it is always with restriction, exception or proviso.

Rev. Morgan Dix, D. D., Senior Rector of Trinity Church, N. Y. City, while claiming such right for the Protestant Church, says : "When Christ came into the world, the private judgment of man *had no right to discuss*, no power to settle, *questions, such as the priestly office, the promises, the commands.*"

Even the *Romish* Church *claims* to grant the right of private judgment to those of its communion.

Rev. J. A. Zahn (R. C.) writes ten pages in the *N. A. Review* of Sept., '93, to prove that "Christian faith and scientific freedom" are reconcilable. He boldly asserts that "the Church has always permitted the greatest liberty of thought and freedom of discussion regarding questions of philosophy and science" (but the modifying words) "*that have no direct bearing on dogma*" (are added.) Again he speaks of "the liberty of thought which the Church has always permitted her children *in matters not connected with faith.*" He quotes from an encyclical of Pope Leo XIII as being supposed to show the freedom of thought permitted by this "illustrious pontiff" as follows : "In those points of doctrine which the human intelligence is able to apprehend by its natural powers it is right that philosophy should be left to its own methods and principles and arguments" (but "his Holiness" is careful to add) "*provided, however, that it does not audaciously withdraw itself from divine authority.*" In another encyclical, on *Human Liberty*, the head of the Church says : "It is not to

be forgotten that there is an immense field for the free exercise of the activity and of the mind of men in those things *which have no relation to the teachings of faith.*"

There is no such thing as mental freedom where the Christian Church holds sway. What were the "dark ages" but the elimination of the light of knowledge in order that the consequent intellectual darkness might give opportunity to the Church to more securely enslave the thoughts of the people? Prof. Draper says: "In 1,200 years, when Christianity dominated the civilized world, the Church had not made a single discovery that advanced the cause of humanity or ameliorated the condition of mankind."

Hallam says: "A cloud of ignorance overspread the whole face of the Church, hardly broken by a few glimmering lights, which owe much of their distinction to the surrounding darkness. . . . For many centuries it was rare for a layman, of whatever rank, to know how to sign his name. . . . In almost every council the ignorance of the clergy forms a subject for reproach."

Buckle says that "for eight centuries there were not in all Christian Europe *four men* who dared to express an independent opinion."

Macaulay says: "The Church of England for a hundred and fifty years was the steady enemy of public liberty."

Guizot says: "When any step was taken to establish a system of permanent institutions which might effectually protect liberty from the invasions of power in general, *the Church* always ranged herself on the side of despotism."

Prof. Oswald says: "The history of Christian dogmatism is the history of over 1,800 years of war against nature and truth."

Hon. Andrew D. White, late president of Cornell University, in his *Warfare of Science* has shown how the Christian Church (Protestant as well as Roman Catholic) has done all that it could to stay the spread of learning and with what relentless hate it attempted the destruction of every investigator in the path of science.



The dogma of Biblical infallibility has been the most uncompromising of slave-masters. Those which this dogma held in servitude to its absurd claims did not dare to make known discoveries of the highest importance and usefulness, in fear of the dungeon, the rack or the stake. Consequently these discoveries were postponed and their benefits lost for centuries.

Medicine, surgery, anæsthetics, agriculture, the fanning-mill, the census, life insurance, the art of printing, gravitation, the rotundity of the earth, the heliocentric system, geography, the use of steam and electricity, have all been interdicted by the church.

Astronomy, geology, biology, palæontology, evolution, all have incurred the most bitter and persistent opposition of the church, and even to-day she contests every inch of ground upon which the investigators of science would advance.

The dogmas of the church have proved and are proving the most despotic and despicable of tyrants, and those it succeeds in enslaving are the most unreasoning, fear-stricken and debased of creatures.

The Church not only holds in bondage the dupes of its dogmas, but it exercises a tyranny of opinion over those who reject its creeds, but who dare not oppose its imperious sway. This accounts for so much legislation in the interest of Christianity. The exemption of church property from taxation, the donating of money for religious purposes, the payments from the government treasury for the maintenance of chaplains in the army, navy and public institutions, the introduction of religion in our public schools are all accomplished through fear of opposition to ecclesiastical domination.

Max Nordau says: "The greatest evil of our times is the prevailing cowardice. We do not dare to assert our opinion to bring our outward lives into harmony with our inward convictions; we believe it to be worldly policy to cling outwardly to relics of former ages, when at heart we are completely severed from them."

Our Sunday laws are enacted at the dictation of Christian zealots, who are the abject slaves of a superstitious reverence

for a day, the observance of which is without the slightest authority—even from the Christian standpoint—a day which Luther and other reformers declared to be no more sacred than any other, and the observance of which Bishop Potter and others of the clergy have said is utterly without warrant.

These tyrannical laws are enacted in violation of that principle of justice which gives equal rights to all; are in contravention of the grand American idea of separation of church and state, and are in decided conflict with both the spirit and letter of constitutional law.

Think of it, that in this enlightened age and in a country, the proudest boast in which is that the liberty of not even the meanest citizen shall be abridged; at the dictation of these autocratic Christian fanatics, honorable persons are forbidden to pursue their legitimate occupations and that many estimable people are fined and lodged in jail. Here are not only *willing* Christian slaves, but those who *protest* against this outrage, are held *unwilling* captives.

If there ever were laws which called for a William Lloyd Garrison to inaugurate a movement toward abolition, the arbitrary laws compelling the religious observance of Sunday are such.

Must we continue to submit to this wrong, as we did to slavery at the south, until "emancipation" is accomplished only by the clash of arms and the sacrifice of treasure and of life?

Atrocious as is physical slavery, mental slavery is even *more* atrocious.

Do all the evils of physical slavery combined, in all ages of the world, compare with the enslavement of the mind by the church, which caused Christian fanatics for three centuries, in nine distinct crusades, to war upon unoffending people, entailing *indescribable misery and the sacrifice of twenty millions* of human lives?

Does the history of physical slavery record a more degrading spectacle than the subjugation of the reasoning faculties which was experienced in the instance of Henry IV of Germany,

crossing the Alps in mid-winter, standing before the castle of Canossa, barefooted and in sack-cloth, for three days and three nights, exposed to most inclement weather, in order to crave forgiveness from Gregory VII, whose mastery over the mind of the potentate was thus shown to be absolute?

Can physical slavery show results more saddening, more sickening, more immoral, more brutal, than "the despotic resolve of the church to rule the minds and consciences of men through its Popes and priesthood" and which resulted in the "Thirty Years' War," with its "eight millions slain and twelve millions surviving to meet horrors worse than death?"

Physical slavery has never displayed a tithe of the inhumanity which has been shown in the mental slavery with which a despotic, intolerant and cruel church has held those who did its bidding in its relentless warfare upon those martyrs for opinion's sake who fed the flames of Seville, Smithfield, Geneva and Salem.

It has been said that "thought is the mightiest thing in the universe." It has indeed a potency before which morality, philosophy, sociology, economics, politics and all national forces are compelled to succumb. It leads in every reform. It is the herald of all progress. It is the pioneer which clears the forests of superstition, of tradition, of legend and of fable, and plants in their stead the seeds of truth. It is the advance guard in its contest with ignorance. And this mighty agent, this great boon to man, ecclesiasticism seeks to enslave and to silence!

There can be no more important work than that of educating people to be freethinkers; to strike for and maintain that freedom of opinion which the Christian Church has ever denied. Let the proclamation of *intellectual emancipation* resound throughout the world and coming generations will call "blessed" the *Freethinkers' Magazine* and all other agencies which have striven to give "liberty to the captive" mind.

But, let him whose auroral flashes of thought irradiate the intellectual sky; whose genius has given beauty to words, as nature gives beauty to the flowers; of whom it can be said—

as Dryden said of Shakespeare—"He was the man who had the largest and most comprehensive soul ; to whom all the images of nature were present ;" him, who is the grandest of all the lovers of liberty of any age ; not only of liberty for the body, but (transcending this) liberty for the mind ; the story of whose vigorous and uncompromising conflict with theological tyranny will live so long as history records noble and self-sacrificing acts, and to whose imperishable name pæons of gratitude, by the mentally emancipated, in the ages to come, will be sung—*the matchless* INGERSOLL ; let *him* give a suitable and brilliant ending to the thoughts which the topic here selected has suggested, by the citation of his sublime *Apostrophe to Liberty* :

"Oh, Liberty, thou art the god of my idolatry ! Thou art the only Deity that hates the bended knee. In thy vast and unwall'd temple—beneath the roofless dome, star-gemmed and luminous with suns—thy worshippers stand erect ! They do not cringe or crawl or bend their foreheads to the earth. The dust has never borne the impress of their lips. Upon thy altars mothers do not sacrifice their babes, nor men their rights. Thou askest naught from man except the things that good men hate—the whip, the chain, the dungeon key.

"Thou hast no popes, no priests, who stand between their fellow-men and thee. Thou carest not for slavish forms, or selfish prayers. Thou hast no monks, no nuns, who, in the name of duty, murder joy. At thy sacred shrine Hypocrisy does not bow, Fear does not crouch, Virtue does not tremble, Superstition's feeble tapers do not burn ; but Reason holds aloft her inextinguishable torch, while on the ever-broadening brow of Science falls the ever-coming morning of the ever-better day."

## FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

THE doctrine of punishment in a future state, to which the theology of Christianity has consigned—*not* those who have been guilty of immoral acts—but those who have dared to question that theology, or who have been disrespectful enough to Christianity to doubt its authority, is the most unfounded, the most repulsive, and (it may perhaps be added) the most unbelievable, or unbelieved, of all the absurd doctrines with which the Christian church has attempted to fetter the brains of its disciples. Of all the teachings of the Christian religion, this is the most preposterous and monstrous. It has no basis in common sense; for the punishment to be inflicted is *not* by reason of the commission of any crime, but only and simply *because of the exercise of the reasoning faculties*. This doctrine is the outgrowth of that superstitious fear, which has always existed among the ignorant and credulous and though a belief in it is professed by many intelligent persons, such belief (or *profession* of belief) is undoubtedly in consequence of the absence of intelligent thought on the subject. There are indications that the church itself is becoming ashamed of this doctrine, for there are comparatively few who now acknowledge belief in it. What is known as the “higher criticism” has exposed its presumptuous claims and it is hoped that the day is not far distant when this most horrible of all the component parts of an unreasoning theology will be among the things that were.

The efforts of late made to substitute for the harsh, Saxon, word “Hell,” the more mild, Hebrew, word *Sheol*, or the more mystic, Greek word, *Hades*, is another indication of a desire to soften the asperity of what so grates on the ear of benevolence.

A *certain* belief in hell comes to us from away back of the Christian era. It is peculiar to most religions, and Christianity borrowed it, as she did almost every dogma of ancient times that could instill fear and submission to authority into the minds of her subjects. No religion, however, presents any picture of the horrors of the damned, at all comparable to that portrayed by the Christian religion.

Rev. Charles A. Allen, says : " It is significant that Christianity alone has taught the horrors of an everlasting gulf between heaven and hell."

Listen to a few " Orthodox " views on this subject :

" Husbands shall see their wives, parents their children, tormented before their eyes ; the bodies of the damned shall be crowded together in hell, like grapes in a wine press, which press one another till they burst ; every distinct sense and organ shall be assailed with its own appropriate and most exquisite sufferings."—*Jeremy Taylor*. (And yet Bishop Taylor was regarded as one of the most liberal and enlightened of the clergy of the Seventeenth century.)

" There sighs, complaints and ululations loud  
Resounded thro' the air without a star,  
Whence I, at the beginning, wept thereat.  
Language diverse—horrible dialects ;  
Accents of anger—words of agony,  
And voices high and harsh, with sound of hands ;  
Made up a tumult that goes whirling on  
Forever—in that air forever black."—*Dante*.

" Forever harassed with a dreadful tempest, they shall feel themselves torn asunder by an angry God and transfixed and penetrated by mortal stings, terrified by the thunderbolts of God and broken by the weight of His hand, so that to sink into any gulf would be more tolerable than to stand for a moment in these terrors. Even infants bring their damnation with them."—*John Calvin*.

" In that lake, it is wonderful to think how wicked, damned, fools, shall be tormented. . . . The shame that shall cover their faces shall be perpetual ; the fire that shall devour them

is eternal; the horrors that shall astonish them are everlasting; the worm that gnaweth upon their conscience never dies; the pains which they shall feel shall never have an end.”—*George Webbe*.

“A dark  
Illimitable ocean, without bound,  
Without dimension, where length, breadth and height  
And time and place are lost, where eldest Night  
And chaos, ancestors of nature, hold  
Eternal anarchy.”—*John Milton*.

“The rotation of the earth is caused by lost souls trying to escape from the fire in the center of the earth—which is the wall of hell—thus making the whole revolve, as the squirrel, by climbing, turns its cage.”—*Father Hardonin*.

“Any human idea of hell is heaven compared with what is really hell.”—*St. Boneventura*.

“The redeemed in heaven will have no compassion for the damned in hell, tho’ they see their tortures.”—*St. Thomas Aquinas*.

“The woes of sinners in hell will not be a cause of grief to saints in heaven, but of rejoicing; will be the fruit of perfect holiness and conformity to Christ. . . . After your godly parents shall have seen you lie in hell millions of years or ages, in torment, day and night, they will not begin to pity you then. They will praise God that his justice appears in the eternity of your misery. The torments of hell will be immeasurably greater than being in a glowing oven, a brick kiln or fiery furnace.”—*Jonathan Edwards*.

“With iron bands, they bind their hands  
And cursed feet together,  
And cast them all, both great and small,  
Into that lake forever:  
Where day and night, without respite,  
They wail and cry and howl,  
For torturing pain which they sustain  
In body and in soul.”—*Michael Wigglesworth*.

“Burning continually, yet unconsumed.”—*Pollock*.

“Eternal plagues and heavy chains,  
Tormenting rocks and fiery coals  
And darts to inflict immortal pains,  
Dyed in the blood of damned souls.”—*Dr. Watts*.

“Infants sustain precisely the same relation to the Divine law and justice as adults.”—*Rev. H. Shedd*.

“Thank God the day is not far distant when you will be chained down to Hell’s brazen floor, and the devil, with his three-pronged harpoon, will pierce your reeking heart and pile the red hot cinders of black damnation upon you as high as the Pyramids of Egypt, and fry out the pride of your heart to grease the gudgeons of hell.”—*Rev. Samuel Cawson*, of Clarksburg, Va.

“I see him (the rebellious soul) dashing down the vast abyss, striking from projecting crag to crag, until he lands upon that seething lake of fire and bounding from wave to wave, wrestling, struggling, groaning, forever and forever.”—*Rev. Dr. N. C. McCoy*.

(See *N. O. Picayune*, July 18, 1888.)

“At the judgment day, thy body will join thy soul and thou wilt have *two* hells, thy soul sweating drops of blood and thy body suffused with agony. Thy body will lie asbestos-like, forever unconsumed; all thy veins roads for the feet of pains to travel on; every nerve a string on which the devil shall forever play his diabolical tune of Hell’s unutterable lament.”—*C. H. Spurgeon*.

“What is the use of explaining away a furnace of fire, when God says there is one. . . . Jesus Christ descended into Hell. He walked down the fiery steps. He stepped off the bottom rung of the long ladder of despair. He put his bare foot on the hottest coal of the fiercest furnace.”—*Rev. T. De Witt Talmage*.

“The punishment of sin in the world to come, is grievous torments in soul and body, without intermission, in hell fire, forever.”—*Westminster Catechism*.



Rev. S. Henderson Smythe, of N. Y. City, says : "If there is no Hell, then are we the miserable dupes of a Deity who is worse than the Devil of the Bible."

The doctrine of Hell is intensified by the estimate which the clergy have made of the proportion of human beings who are consigned thereto.

Jonathan Edwards thought "that the bigger part of men that have died are gone to hell." A Presbyterian clergyman at the general assembly in 1891, computed that thirty souls went to hell *every minute*. Chrisostom doubted if 100 out of every 100,000 would be saved. A professor of history in Oxford, in the 17th century estimated that not one in a hundred thousand, and probably not one in a million escaped hell. Two centuries ago, an English preacher urged that one person saved out of every million would be a liberal calculation.

While this absurd and almost unthinkable doctrine of hell is professed by *all* Orthodox Christians, to the credit of their human nature, though at the expense of their honesty, it must be admitted that but few of them actually believe it, and their numbers are decreasing daily, while the great body of rational beings and independent thinkers have utterly repudiated it.

The poet Whittier says : "I recognize the importance of the revolt from the awful dogma of predestined happiness for the few and damnation for the many. Slowly but surely the dreadful burden of this old belief is being lifted from the heart of humanity."

The *Christian Leader* says : "Sooner or later the revolt of the public mind and heart from the dreadful dogma of eternal damnation will be complete."

Rev. John W. Chadwick, of Brooklyn, says : "The doctrine of an eternal, fiery hell, has not one minister in the Evangelical Church to do it reverence now, where, fifty years ago, it had a hundred."

Rev. J. M. Capes (Church of England) says : "In the stories about Jupiter, Juno, Mars, Minerva and Apollo, there is nothing so frightful as the notion that the eternal God has

doomed little children to hell fire, because Adam was seduced by a silly woman to eat a fruit which a serpent told him was delicious."

*Rev. Dr. Rylance*, of St. Mark's Church, New York city, says: "Very few men can be found to-day who accept the notion of an absolute predestination of the few to everlasting life and the vast majority to the horrors of an everlasting hell."

*Rev. Howard McQueary* says: "The doctrine of an endless hell is disappearing from theology."

*Rev. W. S. Rainsford, D. D.*, of St. George's Church, New York City, says: "The doctrine of endless punishment is damnable."

*Rev. S. Miller Hegeman*, late of Princeton, New Jersey, says: "A God of Hell must be a God of Hate."

"The odious ruthfulness of Calvinism, which turns God into Moloch and man into human fuel for endless flames, proclaimed itself as the only logical inference from Scripture texts."—*Archdeacon Farrar*.

The New York *Tribune* says: "Archdeacon Farrar's formal declaration, in the recent English Church conference, that the old dogma of eternal punishment is dead, beyond resurrection, would have precipitated a savage and relentless controversy in the church, twenty-five years ago. To-day it hardly excites notice."

*Rev. Leighton Parks*, of Emanuel Church, Boston, says: "No man can be found who believes to-day the dogma that every soul that has not heard the Gospel should be damned."

"Let's circumscribe be some slight restriction  
The eternity of hell's hot jurisdiction."—*Byron*.

"The dogma of eternal punishment is *not* 'good tidings of great joy'—but *bad* tidings of great *woe*."—*Gail Hamilton*.

"His talk of hell where devils dwell  
Our vera souls does harrow."—*Burns*.

*Rev. Edward Everett Hale*, speaks of the "horrible dogma about hell."

*Dr. Parker*, of London, says : "A theology teaching that men may be condemned for not believing what they never heard should be branded and excommunicated."

*Rev. Dr. Parkhurst*, of New York City, said in the New York City Presbytery, January 23, 1890 : "*The damn side of holiness has been just a little overworked.*"

"No such doctrine as that of eternal damnation ought to be admitted that carries in it an idea of cruelty beyond what the blackest tyrants have ever invented."—*Bishop Burnett*.

The late *Rev. Henry W. Bellows, D. D.*, said : "No Andersonville prison, with its Wurtges and Winders, summoning the world to curse its systematic cruelties, deserves one iota of the loathing and hatred with which the united race should repel the idea of a predestined ruin—in a flaming pit—for endless ages."

Even *Rev. A. H. Hewit* in the *Catholic World* says : "The doctrine that mankind is lost . . . is utterly false and absurd."

At the New York City Presbytery, January 29, 1890, Elder Charles H. Woodbury, of the Madison Avenue Church, had the courage to say, "I never will worship a being who creates men merely to damn them."

And he who has done most to rid the world of this "crowning horror of dogmatic theology"—this "mother dogma of the whole brood of evangelical ideas"—the true-hearted, courageous and eloquent *Ingersoll*, speaks of the doctrine of eternal punishment as the "fanged and frightful dogma that souls were made to feed the eternal hunger of a God's revenge"—and adds "this dogma is the disgrace and degradation of the Christian world. . . . It has furrowed the cheeks of the good and tender with tears. It is the most ignorant, the most infamous, the most absurd idea that ever found lodging in the brain of man."

But even admitting the possibility of the truth of the doctrine of this "eternal horror," the present and future inhabitants of hell may be comforted by the encouraging words to be found in the utterances of the scholarly Roman Catholic,

Professor St. George Mivart, who says, "There is no dogma more repellant to the modern mind than that of the eternity of hell and few things could be more justly repellant than the way in which that dogma has been proclaimed and defended by certain theologians. In what a different light, however, will that doctrine appear if hell is regarded as the *asylum of natural beatitude, provided by supreme mercy and love.* . . . Hell in its widest sense . . . must be considered as . . . an *abode of happiness, transcending all our most vivid anticipations; so that man's natural capacity for happiness is there gratified to the utmost.*"

Professor Mivart has also gone so far as to say that, owing to the spirit which the dwellers in hell, being in harmony with the nature of most people, *there is more happiness for the majority there, than in heaven.*

Take courage then ; none need to quake  
With fear of what the future be.  
Hell may not be a burning lake,  
But where exists felicity.

Many of the "fathers of the church" confirm the opinions expressed by Mivart.

St. Augustine has distinctly affirmed that "the damned prefer their existence, as damned souls, to non-existence."

Shakespeare also bears similar testimony : "A man may live as quiet in hell as in a sanctuary ; and people sin upon purpose because *they would go thither.*"—*Much Ado* ii: 1.

The doctrines of a future state as it conforms to orthodox opinion is not as ancient as is generally supposed.

J. T. Sutherland, in "What is the Bible," says it is absent from those parts of the Bible written before the captivity. Dean Stanley says, "The doctrine of the immortality of the soul does not appear in the first half of the Old Testament."

Rev. Dr. James Freeman Clarke says, "It is a curious and very noticeable fact that the religion of Moses teaches no such doctrine as future retribution. It appears nowhere in the Old Testament. Reward and punishment in *this* world *not* in the *next*, is the doctrine of the Old Testament." Dr. Clarke also

alludes to the moral, or rather *im-moral*, side of the doctrine of hell and shows how much more elevating is the absence of such doctrine. He says, "The moral influence of the teaching of Moses and the prophets is that they show the grandeur and nobleness of goodness; they rouse the higher nature in man; they purify and elevate all the moral sensibilities."

Canon Farrar says that "It is a monstrous delusion to suppose that the fear of hell is a deterrent from sin."

James E. Stone, who murdered *six* persons of one (the Wratten) family in Jeffersonville, Indiana, September 18th, 1893, was not deterred from his diabolical act by his belief in the doctrine of hell; but listen to the consequences of a belief in the doctrine, *not* of *punishment* for *wrong-doing* but of *reward* for *right-thinking*, that is for thinking or believing, (or *pretending* to believe) as the Church directs. This wholesale murderer (but *redeemed Christian*) "maintained to the last that the angels in heaven awaited his coming; that his crimson-stained hands had been washed in the blood of the lamb: that he had made his peace with God and man and awaited with fortitude his execution."

Rev. Charles Tinsley and Rev. H. W. McKane, of Jeffersonville, furnished this murderous saint with his passports to glory.

Another murderer, whose victim was his wife, "experienced religion" shortly before his execution and in the full assurance of his spiritual advisers that his sins were all forgiven him, he having expressed belief in the doctrine of the Christian church, was eager to enter the realms of bliss, which his "faith" had made him certain was his reward. He expressed one regret, however, but *only one*, and that was that his wife could never join him in the blissful abode to which his piety had assigned him, for the reason that *she had died before the opportunity had been presented to her of joining the Christian church.*

How consoling to murderers and other criminals are the Christian doctrines, of belief by faith, of eleventh hour repentance, of the never-ending consequences of the talismanic words "I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."

Can there be any doctrine more inconsistent with common sense, more illogical, more immoral and (if there be such a thing as blasphemy) more *blasphemous* than that which teaches reliance for reward, in the (supposed) world to come solely on belief in the text, "he that believeth shall be saved," contained in a book in which are found more errors and contradictions; more untruthfulness and obscenity than in any publication that exists or ever has existed; or that teaches reliance (solely) on that other text (in the same untruthful and immoral book) "he that believeth not shall be damned" as warrant for the absurd doctrine that all goodness and loving kindness; all acts of mercy, duty, charity, and beneficence; all lives of truthfulness, uprightness, honor and virtue; are (in the language of piety) but "filthy rags," and that, notwithstanding all these ennobling characteristics, a simple want of faith in so unreasonable a doctrine as the Christian church makes requisite, consigns the best and grandest of the human race to an eternity of misery?

How much longer will it be before intelligent Christians will see the folly, the immorality of the dogma of future punishment?

## SUPERSTITION.

“The greatest burden of the world is superstition.”—*Millon*.

COL. ROBERT G. INGERSOLL, in his lecture on *Liberty for Man, Woman, and Child*, shows the enormous advance which has been accomplished by the human intellect in every department of thought, except in that of religion, which, with a very large number of its adherents, remains, with scarcely any improvement, the same as it existed centuries ago; and so, while rational thought is constantly presenting new problems of life and suggesting improvements by which greater advantage to and greater happiness for the human race can be secured, it is thwarted by the same or similar superstitions which have come down to us from dark and ignorant ages.

We pity the superstitious “poor Indian whose untutored mind sees God in clouds and hears him in the wind.” Yet, people of intelligence indulge in precisely the same belief—superstition. Their doctrine of a “special providence,” which sends the lightning, the tornado and the earthquake, is identical with that of the savage.

Among the superstitious beliefs which the Hindoo mythology furnishes is that which attributes vast destructive powers to Mahadiva.

A Presbyterian clergyman at Charleston, S. C., attributes the same destructive powers to God and tells his congregation that the earthquake which occurred there a few years since was a specific act of God, sent to punish the people of that place for their sins!

Similar ignorant and absurd utterances may be heard from almost any orthodox pulpit.

Luther claimed that the winds were spirits and that he had a faculty of calming them.

Several of the Reformers believed that comets betokened evil. The following lines illustrate their teachings :

“Eight things there be a comet brings,  
When it on high doth horrid range ;  
Wind, famine, plague and death to Kings,  
War, earthquakes, floods, and direful change.”

Clement, of Alexandria, mentioned the prevailing belief that hail storms and tempests and similar phenomena are caused by the anger of demons and evil angels.

Origen states that famine, the blighting of vines and trees and the destruction of beasts and men, are the personal works of demons.

Tertulian expressed similar views.

St. Thomas Aquinas affirmed that disease and tempests are the direct work of the devil. Indeed, this belief prevailed until very recent times. (See *Supernatural Religion*, vol. 1, p. 121.)

Professor Andrew D. White tells us that, owing to some superstitious belief, many of the peasants of Russia were prevented from raising potatoes ; that a superstitious reverence for the text, “The wind bloweth where it listeth,” caused fanning mills (for winnowing wheat) to be widely denounced ; that in consequence of the divine displeasure shown to innkeepers in France for setting meat before guests on fast days, railways had been introduced and such innkeepers thus punished by seeing travelers carried past their doors ! that a superstitious fear of the electric current had caused the telegraph to be denounced as anti-Christ ; that the breaking of the Thames tunnel, with all its destruction to life and property, was a judgment from heaven ; that the numbering of the people in modern countries met the same displeasure from on high as did the numbering of Israel ; that the beneficial effects of life insurance had been opposed by some superstitious belief ; that so strong was the opinion that disease came, not from natural causes, but from the malice of the devil, Pope



Innocent III forbade physicians, under pain of excommunication, to undertake medical treatment without calling in *ecclesiastical* advice!

Many physicians\* refused to administer anæsthetics to their suffering patients on the ground of its being opposed by Bible teachings.

The *Christian Register* says: "Dr. Briggs never uttered a more wholesome truth than when he classed bibliolatry with mariolatry and other superstitions."

The Bible is as much a *fetich* as was ever believed in by the most uncivilized of the human race. The belief in its inspiration, in its account of creation, in the fall of man, in the promised Messiah, in the stories pertaining to Jonah, to Daniel, to Elijah, to Noah, to Joshua, are all mere superstitions.

The ridiculously silly faith in the Bible is illustrated by an anecdote. A sailor returning home from a sea voyage told his mother of his having seen a flying fish (which are frequently seen in tropical waters.) "Why, John, do you tell me such a lie?" quoth the mother. Shortly afterwards John told his mother that sailing in the Red Sea, one day he fished up one of the wheels of Pharaoh's chariot. "John, I know now you are telling me the truth, for there is something about this in the Bible," said the mother.

The Indian who acted as messenger between two intelligent persons, carrying a piece of paper on which was writing, believed that the paper was inspired to talk.

Is this any more superstitious than the belief of Christians that the writings of Moses and Isaiah and Paul and others, mere human beings, are—also—inspired?

The heathen (so-called) indulge in superstitious incantations to drive away disease or send for their priest to avert physical ailments, while the Christian's Bible teaches (James v; 14-15.) "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the

\* Even in this enlightened day.

sick." Which is the most superstitious, the heathen or the Christian?

The doctrines of the atonement, of miraculous conception, of virgin birth, of the trinity, of the resurrection, of the ascension, of a heaven and a hell, have no known foundation in fact, but rest upon belief in the supernatural and are therefore superstitious.

The dogma of reconciliation, through Christ, between God and man, and of endless torment, are thus repudiated by Rev. R. Heber Newton. "We read of offerings of sheep and bullocks, all down the ages, to placate an angry God. How very superstitious and ignorant that was. . . . Faith has outlived the superstitious doctrines of the atonement and eternal punishment. . . . There is not one single passage in the Bible which says that Christ was sacrificed to reconcile God to man."

The Bible is the foundation of superstitious beliefs which have wrought more woe in the human breast than has been occasioned by any other single cause. Read the heartrending tales of the heroes and martyrs to Christian cruelty for the crime (!) of disbelief in the incongruities, absurdities, falsehoods and indecencies of the Bible. Protestantism and Catholicism seemed to vie with each other as to which could inflict the greater torture on those honest souls, which those fiend-like, religious tyrants called "heretics."

The superstitious reverence for the Bible and its supposed teachings, have been for centuries (as it were) the dark clouds of ignorance and fear which almost wholly excluded the light of intelligence. Intellectual thought is at least a thousand years behind what it would have been had no such fetich as the Bible ever existed. The persecutions and harrowing deaths of some of the most accomplished scholars in history, because they refused to accept the pseudo-science of Moses and other writers equally ignorant of the laws of nature, is a commentary on the bigotry, the want of intelligence and the superstitions which controlled the Christian Church. There is one verse in that book which, in its consequences, has shown

more vindictiveness and barbarity than can be shown in any other book that was ever written ; that verse is : "Thou shalt not permit a witch to live." Think of the scenes of torture and cruelty practiced by the Christian religion, because that one verse was found within the lids of the Bible. All that is humane in us revolts at the horrors which that single verse has wrought. Pale, fear-stricken, innocent victims of this frightful Christian doctrine to the number of nine millions (!) of people have been put to death ; not by the heathen but by Christians ; not by the ignorant, but by the educated ; by the encouragement which such men of learning as Sir Matthew Hale, Sir William Blackstone, Joseph Addison, Martin Luther, Cotton Mather, Richard Baxter, and John Wesley gave to this most execrable barbarism and stupidly irrational superstition. Fanaticism reached its culmination when Christianity insisted that this edict of inspiration (!) this command of a merciful (!) God should be put into execution.

And yet, though Christians *now* abstain from the perpetration of such fiendish cruelty, the same unreasoning reverence for the Bible evidences the fact that the superstition which engenders such reverence is the same as has always existed and it is only the march of civilization, the greater intelligence of the age, the advance made in scientific research (*despite the hostility of the Christian Church*) which has stayed the hand of Christian bigots from practicing the same cruelties in this generation as they did in generations that are past.

As Col. Ingersoll says, "If the church could control the world to-day, we would go back to chaos and old night. Philosophy would be branded as infamous. Science would again press its pale and thoughtful face against the prison bars. Around the limbs of liberty would climb and leap the bigots' flame."

It was a mere conflict of superstitions between two sects of Christians which resulted in a thirty years' war with its attendant miseries.

Three centuries of crusades by Christian Europe against an unoffending people, because of a vague superstitious belief in

a "Holy Sepulchre," cost the world twenty millions of lives and untold horror.

Is it not surprising that there are intelligent men and women who appear to be believers in the superstitions regarding Friday, the number thirteen, the new moon, the horse shoe, passing under a ladder, opening an umbrella in the house, breaking a mirror, upsetting a salt cellar, throwing rice or a slipper after a bride, the howling of a dog, etc. Such absurdities seem unworthy the serious thought of sentient beings. Educated believers in such irrational superstitions place themselves on a par with the most ignorant and debased of the human race. If it were thought worthy of sufficient notice it might be shown that quite as many events of interest and importance to mankind occurred on Friday as on any other day of the week ; for instance : Such as the discovery of America and the birthday of Washington ; also that the superstition regarding the number thirteen was set at defiance, for instance, when the pen of Thomas Paine (which was unquestionably "mightier than the sword" of Washington) became the most potent factor in securing success to the struggling colonies, after the issuance of just *thirteen* numbers of his *Crisis*, and when the *thirteen* states, composing the most independent, progressive and prosperous republic of which history furnishes any record started on their career of greatness and grandeur, and were emblemized by a flag waving to the breeze its inspiring thirteen stars and thirteen stripes.

And as to other similar superstitions, there is the most abundant evidence of the folly of believing in them.

What is superstition? The etymology of the word, as derived from the Latin, does not give it the signification which is usually imparted to it.

President White, late of Cornell University, says : "The Greek word superstition signifies, literally, fear of gods or demons."

Plutarch says : "The superstitious man believes that there are gods and that they are unfriendly to him. A man who fears the gods is never free from fear. He extends his fear

beyond his death and believes in the gates of hell and its fires, in the darkness, in its ghosts, its infernal judges. The superstitious man wishes he did not believe in gods—as the Atheist does not—but fears to disbelieve in them.”

The *Imperial Dictionary* defines superstition as belief in the direct agency of superior power—as a belief in *witchcraft, magic* and *apparition*.

It is defined by Worcester as “the form which religion takes when the mind worships a false object. A belief in the existence of particular facts or phenomena produced by supernatural agency, of *which the existence is not proved*.”

By Webster as “an excessive reverence for, or fear of, that which is unknown, or mysterious. Belief in the direct agency of superior powers, in *magic, omens, prognostics*.”

By Stormont as “remaining in old, obsolete, unreasonable, religious belief. Unfounded wonder at, or dread of the divine or supernatural. That form of religion in which fear is stronger than love. Belief in what is absurd or without evidence. *Idle fancies and practices in regard to religion and the unseen world*.”

Thus it may be seen that lexicographers of the highest authority agree, substantially, in defining superstition as a belief in supernaturalism, and that supernaturalism is opposed to rationalism; an unfounded and unreasonable dread of some unknown and unknowable power; as fear of the existence of what is impossible to demonstrate or reasonable to believe; as giving credence to such fancies of the brain as witchcraft, magic, apparitions, omens, prophecies and other absurdities; or being so controlled by fear of God or gods, as to compel the sacrifice of the natural instincts of love.

These definitions apply with equal force to every religion which has ever existed and *to every religion which exists to-day*.

Religion and superstition are convertible laws. There is no religion (in the usual meaning of the term) that is not superstitious and no superstition which is not allied to some religion.

Hobbs tells us that “religion is superstition *in* fashion and

superstition is religion *out of fashion*." Undoubtedly the social element in religion is a controlling one.

The three great branches of the Christian church (the Romish, the Greek and the Protestant) have their respective superstitions, but each regards itself as free from superstition, though claiming that both of the others are superstitions.

A portion of the Protestant church regards the Roman Catholic dogma of *tran*-substantiation as superstitious, but that belief in *con*-substantiation is not superstitious (while other Protestant sects regard both as superstitious.)

Each of these three great branches have (what might be called) sub-divided superstition. One Protestant sect believes the practice of baptism by immersion a superstition, while another Protestant sect thinks infant baptism superstitious. The Armenian thinks Calvinism superstitious and the Calvinist thinks Armenianism superstitious.

The doctrine of the atonement, future punishment and the Trinity are regarded by one portion of the Protestant church as superstitious, while those who adhere to those dogmas regard those who are not believers in them as worse than superstitious.

Christianity, as opposed to all anti-Christian religions, is probably the most presumptuous, arrogant and bigoted of all religions, notwithstanding the fact that the origin of almost every rite, ceremony and belief of the Christian church can be traced to religions which existed centuries before the Christian era.

If it was superstitious to believe in the "tonsured head and silvery bells and swinging censer" of ancient religions, why is it not equally superstitious to believe in precisely the same rites when performed in a Christian church?

Was it superstitious to venerate the cross as typifying the religions of antiquity, and is it not now superstitious to adore and worship the same sign as a symbol of Christianity?

Were the Pagan celebrations of Christmas and Easter superstitions? If so, is it not superstitious to believe in the dogmas of the Christian church as to observance of these same days?

Was it superstitious to believe in the sacramental use of water, and of bread, and of wine, in the centuries prior to the coming of Christ ; and is it not superstitious to believe in *exactly* the same rites since Christ came into the world.

Is it reasonable to believe that the Hindoo tradition of Adami and Heva was a superstition ; and that the Jewish fable of Adam and Eve is a literal truth ?

Was it superstitious to believe that Maya gave virgin birth to Buddha ; and is it not superstitious to believe that Mary was the virgin mother of Jesus ?

Was it superstitious to believe in the virgin birth of Chrishna, and of Romulus and Remus ; and is it not superstitious to believe a like impossibility with regard to the founder of Christianity ?

Was it superstitious to believe in all the Holy Madonnas of the remote past ; and is it not equally superstitious to believe in the Holy Madonna of the Christian's faith ?

Was the deification of Chrishna, of Gautama, of Laou-tze and others (whose lives are almost a perfect parallel with that of Christ) superstitions ? If so, why is not the deification of Christ a like superstition ?

Were the Trinities of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha ; of Mithra, Oromasdes and Ahriman ; of Indra, Varuna and Agni ; of Osiris, Isis and Horus ; of Odin, Vili and Ve, superstitions ? If so, what reason is there for supposing that the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost is not likewise a superstition ?

Was it a superstition to believe in miraculous conception by the gods and ghosts of India, Persia, Egypt, China, Japan, Greece and Rome ; and is it not superstitious to believe in the dogma of miraculous conception by the holy ghost of Christianity ?

One of the most absurd superstitions of either ancient or modern times is belief in dreams. It is said that the time occupied in even the longest of dreams is but a few seconds. And yet, in these few seconds of time, by an idle and vague fancy, on the delirium of an irresponsible brain, *on a dream* (of Joseph, the

father of Christ) is founded the whole of the theology of orthodox Christianity. Can there be anything more unreasonable or superstitious than this?

Was it a superstition to believe that Ganymede was transported to heaven by Jupiter? Why is it not *equally* superstitious to believe in the translation of Enoch, the wafting of Elijah by a whirlwind to heaven, or the ascension of Christ?

“And Saul said to the witch of Endor, Bring me up Samuel.” Christians believe that Samuel’s ghost thereupon appeared, as thoroughly as they believe that Samuel once existed in the flesh, and yet these same Christians are unbelievers in any *other* descriptions of spooks.

Is it any less superstitious to believe in the ghost of Samuel than in the ghosts, goblins, gnomes or elves of to-day; or in phantom ships or haunted houses?

Was it superstitious to believe that the life of Metalla was saved by a sacrifice of a heifer, and is it not superstitious to believe that the life of Isaac was saved by the sacrifice of a ram?

Was it superstitious to believe that the priests of the goddess Feronie walked upon burning coals in the fires that were made in honor of Apollo, and is it not superstitious to believe the Bible story of the three men in the fiery furnace?

And is it superstitious to believe that the holy women of the temple of Diana walked upon burning coals, barefooted, without burning, and not superstitious to believe the teachings of Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage that “Jesus descended into hell . . . and put his bare foot on the hottest coal in the fiery furnace?”

Was it superstitious to believe that, in obedience to a vision of the god Serapis, Vespasian effected cures of the blind and the lame (as related by Tacitus), and is it not superstitious to believe in similar cures recited in the New Testament?

Was it superstitious to believe that Hippolites and Alcoste were raised from the dead, and is it not superstitious to believe in the resurrection of him who was touched by the bones of Elisha, of Lazarus and of Christ?



Was it superstitious to believe that Triptolemus was nourished by divine milk, and is it not superstitious to believe that Elijah was fed by ravens; that the children of Israel were supplied with quail, "by a wind from the Lord," three and a third feet deep and more than a thousand square miles in extent; and that, for forty years, Manna rained upon the earth?

Was it superstitious to believe that Minerva caused streams of oil to flow from a rock which she smote, and is it not superstitious to believe that water gushed from a rock smitten by Moses?

Was it superstitious to believe that the walls of the city of Thebes were built by the sound of musical instruments, and is it not superstitious to believe that the walls of the city of Jericho fell by the sound of trumpets?

Is it not preposterous to believe in the utterance of human language by Æsop's dumb animals, and is it not equally preposterous and is it not supremely superstitious to believe in the stories of the talking snake of Eden or of Baalam's colloquial ass?

Is it not absurdly unreasonable to give credence to the tales of Munchausen, and not equally unreasonable and superstitious to believe the Bible stories of Jonah, Daniel, Samson and Joshua, or the seemingly insane "Revelations of St. John the Divine?"

In the New Testament we are treated to a remarkable account of a man who was possessed of a "legion" of devils, who were commanded to come out of the man and, obeying, entered a herd of two thousand swine, who ran violently down a steep hill into the sea and were drowned. Founded upon this fable is a legend that these devils "made their exit through the fore-feet of the swine, leaving small holes, which can be seen on close inspection." Belief in which—the Gadarene pig story, or the legend—is the most superstitious?

In Matt. xvii-2, Peter is told to go to the sea and cast a hook, and in the mouth of the first fish that he takes he is to find a piece of money. There is a legend that "the black spot on

each side of the haddock, near the gills, is the impression of Peter's finger and thumb, when he took the piece of money from the fish's mouth." Which of these two fish stories is the least believable or the less superstitious?

The law given to Moses provided that if a husband became jealous of his wife he could test her guilt or innocence by the peculiar method of bringing her before the priest and of having placed in his hands, in a earthen vessel, some holy (!) water—mixed with the dust of the floor—and if the "holy water" turned bitter, then the woman's guilt was proved, and she was compelled to swallow the bitter water, and if the water did not turn bitter, then her innocence was established.

As regards this infallible (!) test, "Behold, is it not written" in the fifth chapter of the book of Numbers in "God's infallible word?"

In the days of ancient Rome was a somewhat similarly peculiar method of testing the guilt or innocence of a suspected person by compelling such person to swallow a piece of bread or cheese of a prescribed weight. The person so swallowing, if choked to death, was proved guilty, if not, innocent.

Is it possible to determine as to belief in which of these absurdities is the most superstitious and idiotic?

We are told by John of Patmos that "there was war in heaven." If so, may it not *again* occur? Therefore, can it be that it is not a superstition to believe in the possible turmoil and conflict in heaven, and that it *is* a superstition to believe in the restfulness and peacefulness of Nirvana?

Is it superstitious to believe in the inspiration of the Vedas, the Zend-avesta, the Tripitaka, the Koran, the Talmud, the book of Mormon, and not *equally* superstitious to believe in the inspiration of the Bible?

The principle of evil was personalized in India by Mahisasura, in Persia by Ahriman, in Egypt by Typhon, in Scandinavia by Loki, in Madagascar by Nyang.

The Christian religion teaches that the Devil of the Bible is a personality as real as any of the characters in that book, and

as potent for evil as God is for good ; indeed *more* so ! Is not belief in all such creations of the imagination (as being actual, real, personalities) intensely superstitious ?

If Brahma, and Ormuzd, and Thor, and Zeus, and Jupiter, and Allah were superstitiously worshiped, what reason is there for believing that it is not equally a superstition to worship the Jehovah of the Jews or the God of the Christians ?

The superstitions of religion have robbed truth of her birth-right ; have given cordial welcome to tradition, legend and fable, while repelling verity, reality and fact.

“the truth  
With superstitions and tradition taint.”—*Milton*.

It is these religious superstitions that have incited distrust, engendered hate, disaffected families, estranged friends, alienated neighbors, embittered communities, hostilized nations, induced fear, impelled to cruelty, extirpated pity, rewarded hypocrisy, countenanced deception, prevarication and injustice, encouraged ignorance, indolence, improvidence and uncleanness, sneered at “mere morality,” true philanthropy and sound philosophy, repressed mirth, anathematized laughter, ridiculed natural law, perverted human nature, disparaged human goodness, stifled natural affection, perverted history, opposed progress, discountenanced learning, rebuked investigation, discredited discovery, derided invention, persecuted genius, and warred upon science.

The superstitions of no religions have been more detrimental to the well being of mankind than those of the Christian faith.

A vivid, but true, picture of what has resulted from superstitions, distinctively Christian, may be found in *Gibbon's Christianity*, p. 400, viz. :

“The dark centuries of Christianity succeeded the learning and civilization developed under the freedom and toleration of ancient Paganism. When the creed of Athanasius ruled the European world, humanity was enchained by superstition and fanaticism, freedom expelled, reason dethroned and the light of intellect quenched in the cimmerian gloom of faith.”

When will this octopus of superstition release its clutches from the brain of man? When will this destructive parasite cease to feed upon the mental life of the race? When will this blighting curse vanish from the world of intelligence?

Very much has been accomplished in recent years, in encouraging reasonable beliefs and in discountenancing unthinking credulity. Very much more remains to be accomplished.

Let those who believe with Milton that "superstition is the greatest burden of the world" be persistent in their efforts to do all they can to lighten such burden, to resist whatever fetters thought, to oppose whatever endangers mental liberty, to war against whatever teachings or inculcations interpose between contemplative, rational, honest thought and the vagaries, hallucinations and phantoms which are sought to be imposed upon the intellect by each and every phase of irresponsible, unjustifiable, unreal, irrational and degrading superstition.

## CHURCH AND STATE.

“Religion is a matter which belongs to the churches and not to the state.”—*Washington.*

THE most distinctive feature, and the most important principle, promulgated on the formation of our government, was the complete separation of the church from the state.

Learning the lessons of experience taught by other nations, of the persecutions, tortures and butcheries, in which this unnatural union has resulted, the founders of our Republic were most pronounced in their determination that this fearful blight upon the prosperity and happiness of older nations should not find entrance on the soil of a people devoted to freedom from all “entangling alliances,” be they political or ecclesiastical; and so Washington and Hamilton and Franklin and Jefferson and Paine guarded this sacred principle with the most jealous and anxious care.

In order to emphasize and enforce the declaration of this principle, in Article VI, Section 3, of the Constitution of the United States, it is provided that “no religious test be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States;” and in the very first of the amendments to the Constitution we read: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion.”

Yet, in face of these most positive inhibitions, firmly imbedded in the Constitution of our country, we hear those over-

zealous in the cause of religion insist that "this is a Christian nation." The argument which it is claimed sustains that position being that as we were once colonies of Great Britain, and subject to her laws, we inherited the laws of the United Kingdom. It being maintained that in the absence of positive law to the contrary we are subject to the "common law of England," and (it being further maintained) that as this law is based on the Christian religion, therefore Christianity is the fundamental law of the United States. The fallacy of this method of reasoning has been often exposed ; by none, perhaps, more thoroughly than by what is known as the "Committee for Protecting and Perpetuating the Separation of Church and State," a body of gentlemen composed mostly of clergymen and other believers in the Christian religion, whose report on the question may be found on pages 718 and 719 of the *New York Churchman* of December 11, 1886, which reads, "Neither the Constitution of the United States nor that of the State of New York authorizes or permits any discrimination or preference in favor of Christianity as against any other religion. . . . With the majority of the people Christians, and no important body of citizens to advance any claims for other religions, it was inevitable that not only legislation but judicial decisions (especially under an elective judiciary) should accord with popular opinion. This usage, which will inevitably continue while the prevailing sentiment is Christian, is the *sole foundation* for the claim sometimes made that Christianity is established by common law. . . .

"Attention has been called to the claim that the United States Constitution recognizes and re-establishes the common law of England, and that this is a Christian land. Various judicial decisions and legislative enactments are pointed out which are distinctly Christian ; therefore it is claimed that Christianity in this country is, by law, established. If the argument proves anything it proves *too much*. The common law of England was not a Christian law, but was *the law of a church established by law*. The conclusion inevitably would be that

if the common law of England is recognized and established by the Constitution of the United States, then not only Christianity but *the Church of England, is, by law, established here*" (!)

Madison said : " If the common law of England had been understood to be the common law of the United States, it is not possible to assign a satisfactory reason why it was not expressed." And again he says : " Who does not see that the same authority which can establish Christianity, in exclusion of all other religions, may establish, with the same ease, any particular sect of Christianity in exclusion of all other sects."

President Madison was so impressed with the belief that the state had no business with the churches he vetoed, in 1811, a bill to incorporate a church in the District of Columbia.

Washington, in the treaty made with Tripoli, in 1796, distinctly stated : " The government of the United States of America is not, in any sense, founded upon the Christian religion."

Jefferson says it was " meant by the framers of the Constitution to comprehend within the mantle of protection the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and the Mohammedan, the Hindoo and the Infidel of every denomination."

President Jefferson, in 1808, on being petitioned to proclaim a day of fasting and prayer, refused, saying : " I consider myself interdicted by the Constitution from doing anything that pertains to religion." He also refused to appoint thanksgiving days.

Chief Justice Kent, in 1810, denied that Christianity was part of the law of the State of New York.

Ex-President Woolsey, of Yale college, says : " Our Constitution would require no change to be adapted to a Mohammedan nation."

The *Christian Register* says : " Ours is not a Christian government. It is a civil government strictly and exclusively. . . . A Christian government implies a state religion."

For Judge Samuel F. Miller, speaking for the Supreme

Court of the United States, says : " The law knows no heresy, is committed to the support of no dogma, the establishment of no sect."

Lord Chief Justice Coleridge said : " Christianity is no longer the law of the land."

Judge Story, of the Supreme Court of the United States, says : " The Constitution of 1790 . . . expressly declares : ' No man can of right be compelled to attend, erect or support any place of worship or to maintain any ministry against his consent ; no human authority can, in any case whatever, control or interfere with the rights of conscience ; and no preference shall be given, by law, to any religious establishment or modes of worship. . . . It must have been intended to extend equally to all sects, whether they believed in Christianity or not and whether they were Jews or Infidels.'"

Even the Roman Catholic Cardinal Manning (in the *Forum* of March, 1889,) takes the position that as the entire separation of church and state is a fundamental principle of the Republic, therefore the state knows nothing of Christianity.

Rev. Dr. Gregg, of the Park Street Church, Boston, says : " It (the Constitution) offers no more protection to the religion of Jesus Christ than the religion of Buddha."

Rev. Dr. Armitage says : " The Baptists maintain that so far as the civil government is concerned a man may be a Jew, Mohammedan, Christian, Pagan or Infidel with impunity.

Rev. Wm. Chauncy Langdon, of St. James Rectory, Bedford, Pa., says : " From no principle of English social or political life did the revolution separate our fathers more effectually and more thoroughly than from that which recognized an established religion of the state."

The late Bishop Phillips Brooks said : " Every institution in which the doctrine of a particular church is inculcated ought, for its own sake and the state's sake, to be guarded most jealously from any connection with state support."

Such is the opinion of all intelligent, broad-minded people, whether they are Christians or not.



The laws of our various States are (like the Bible) contradictory and inconsistent. They all assert, with much "flourish of trumpets," the principle of separation of church and state and at the same time adopt other laws which are dictated by the church. They all provide for the equality of their citizens before the law and yet certain citizens are deprived, by law, of their rights.

The constitution of Illinois recites: "The free exercise of religious profession, without discrimination, shall be forever guaranteed, and no person shall be denied any civil or political right, privilege or capacity on account of his religious opinions." And yet there are several laws there enacted in the interest of a particular religious faith.

In the bill of rights of Arizona we read: "The civil and political rights of no person shall be abridged or enlarged on account of his opinions or belief concerning matters of religion." And yet restraining laws with reference to Sunday, to (what is called) blasphemy, oaths, etc., are passed.

Blasphemy, in some of the States, consists in questioning the deity of one of the sons of Joseph and Mary, or of the (incomprehensible and impossible) doctrine of the Trinity.

The constitution of Tennessee (in Article I, Section 3) provides that "No preference shall ever be given by law to any religious establishment or mode of worship . . . no human authority can, in any case whatever, control or interfere with the rights of conscience." And yet, in article IX, Section 2, it is also provided that "No person who denies the being of God, or a future state of reward and punishment, shall hold any office in the civil department of this State." And in the same article, Section 1, it is also provided that no minister of the Gospel, or priest, shall be eligible to a seat in either house of the legislature." It is in this State that, recently, three of its inhabitants (Christian men, too) were imprisoned for weeks because they exercised the "rights of conscience," which the constitution of Tennessee guaranteed to them, in observing the seventh, instead of the first day of the week as a religious day.

In several of the States the testimony of Agnostics, in the courts, is made liable to discredit, and in other of the States their testimony is forbidden.

Although, as has been said, the principle which sustains the separation of church and state is boldly enunciated by all, the violation of this principle is shown in the appropriation of National and State monies for religious purposes; in the exemption of church property from taxation; in the payment of chaplains to the army, navy, prisons, legislative bodies, etc.; in the teaching of religion in the public schools; in the enactment of Sunday laws; in the proclamation of fast or thanksgiving days.

With reference to appropriating money for religious institutions, Col. Rush C. Hawkins has furnished statistics which show such appropriations in twelve years, from 1875 to 1886, to have aggregated \$12,500,000 for *New York city alone*, of which sum Roman Catholic institutions received nearly two-thirds.

A great wrong has, for years, been perpetrated by the practice of making (United States government) appropriations for "Indian schools," all of which are sectarian institutions, where the tenets of the respective religious denominations are taught. Hon. Thomas J. Morgan, ex-commissioner of Indian affairs, has made an exhaustive report on these matters, prefacing it with the patriotic utterance that he comes "to plead for America, for the Republic, for our most cherished and characteristic institutions, for free thought, free speech, a free press, free schools, free ballots and freedom of conscience." General Morgan informs us that this system was inaugurated in 1877, when the modest little sum of \$20,000 was appropriated from the Federal treasury; but which in sixteen years has grown to \$2,300,000! (nearly two-thirds of which went to the Roman Catholic church).

The Baptist church has always been the most pronounced of (probably) all the churches in the advocacy of the principle that the state and the church should be absolutely separate,

and it is exceedingly gratifying to state that at a meeting of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, in May, 1891, this society, in refusing to longer violate the principle it believed in, gave utterance to these true and honest words: "History is proof that the meddling of ecclesiastics with civil government has embittered political discussions; has added religious fanaticism to partisan rancor; has divided society; has engendered civil international wars; has made princes the tools of prelates, and has endangered the very existence of the state. . . . The hand of the church on the state has induced hypocrisy, formality; a church palsied and corrupt."

The Methodists and Congregationalists have, more recently, also refused to accept the share which was more recently allotted to them, and still more recently the Episcopalian and Presbyterian churches have taken similar action.

In the *Free Thought Magazine* of Sep., 1893, is an article on the taxation of church property, showing the rank injustice of a system which (virtually) takes money from the community and gives it to the churches to disseminate their dogmas. This article gives estimates of the value of church property exempted by law from taxation; beginning with that of Rev. James Freeman Clarke, who placed the value of such exempted property at \$87,000,000 in 1850. Following this are estimates made by Samuel Roberts, Judge Westbrook and General Grant, showing that such exempt property *doubles* in value decennially (or approximately so). Thus we have the startling figure of \$3,000,000,000 as the probable value of exempt church property five years hence, and the alarming sum of \$100,000,000,000 (!) in 1950, *unless* some action be taken (as has been done in California) to do justice to the rest of the community by compelling the churches to pay their equitable share of taxation.

It is gratifying to note a disposition to right this great wrong on the part of the more liberal minded and honest of the clergy, and of the religious press. As illustrations of this fact two quotations (among many others) may be furnished,

viz. : "That which is protected by the government may justly be compelled to maintain it. . . . I would like to see all church property throughout the land taxed to the last dollar's worth."—*Rev. Dr. Shipman*, of Christ Church, New York city.

"In the wiser day coming every dollar of church personal value and every foot of church land will pay taxes to support honest secular government. Remission of taxes for church and church school uses is a secular gift to churches."—*N. W. Christian Advocate*.

The Baptists of Baltimore, of Montreal and of other places have already taken action in favor of taxing church property.

"The Minister's Association of the United Presbyterian Church, at their October meeting in Pittsburgh, debated the question of church exemption from taxation and decided that such exemption was wrong."—*Truth Seeker*.

One of the most *absurd* violations of this principle of church and state separation is the appointment of chaplains to be paid from the secular treasury. A portion of the money raised by the tax levy goes to support persons employed by the State to enunciate certain dogmas (*not one* of which they know anything about).

Both the State and the United States governments pay for the teaching of these dogmas in the army and navy, in our prisons, in our legislative and congressional halls. Is there a more *useless* expenditure of money, to say nothing of the wrong of teaching religion at the expense of the State?

Judge Waite tells us that the church failed to introduce chaplains into the convention that framed the Federal Constitution. In the earlier Congresses the church was more successful. In 1839, 1840, 1845, 1850 and 1860 there was vigorous opposition to the continuance of the chaplains. But the church thus far has proved too much for the state.

There is *not the slightest warrant in law* for appropriating money to pay chaplains.

The reading of the Bible and the inculcation of religion in

our public schools is another phase of the violation of the principle of non-union of church and state. This has long been a most vexed question and has engendered the bitterest feeling among Protestants, Catholics, Jews and Agnostics. A more intelligent and liberal view of this subject is constantly gaining ground, and people are more and more induced to agree with the late Rev. Dr. Howard Crosby (a thoroughly orthodox Presbyterian clergyman) when he says: "We might as well insist on reading the Bible in a machine shop as in a public school. . . . There is no safety for our country but in non-religious, elementary education in our public schools. . . . If the state is to teach religion, what religion is it to furnish? The Roman Catholic, the Jewish, the Chinese, the Agnostic? . . . Is it not better that the Atheist should make his children Atheists than to break up the country and array men against each other?"

Sunday laws, another violation of principle, are on the statute book of every State in the Union, notwithstanding the fact that there is not the slightest warrant for the religious observance of that day to be found within the lids of any book which is recognized as authority. I challenge any of the clergy or any other believer of Christianity to produce such warrant. On the contrary, very many of the church fathers, the Reformers of the sixteenth century, and all the *enlightened and honest* of the clergy of to-day, have acknowledged that our Sunday laws have no foundation whatever in the Christian or any other religion.

Again, the principle of church and state is violated by the appointment of days of fasting, prayer and thanksgiving. President Cleveland recently issued a proclamation in which he calls upon the American people to render thanks to the "Supreme Ruler of the Universe," to pray to the "Father of all mercies" for blessings, to seek the favor of the "Giver of every good and perfect gift," to meet in our "accustomed places of worship" and evince our gratitude to "Almighty God," to acknowledge the "goodness of God," to invoke "Divine approval," etc., etc.

Mr. Cleveland was elected President of the United States for *no such purpose*. He cannot show the *slightest authority* for any such act. He issues this proclamation at the dictation (or in the fear) of not one-third—probably not one-tenth—of the people of this country.

It is an *extra* executive act.

Is this government of ours a Theocracy? One might think we were living in the days of ancient Israel, when “thus saith the Lord” was the talisman by which national existence was sustained.

Notwithstanding the fact that the principle on which our government was founded is already violated by laws enacted in the interest of the Christian religion, there is an attempt on the part of even more fanatical Christians to do still further violence to the spirit which was the guiding principle of the fathers of our Republic.

Many attempts have been made to change the preamble to the Constitution of the United States so as to recognize the Christian religion; and a most determined (but fortunately unsuccessful) effort was made during last year under the auspices of the “National Reform Association,” which, with the “American Sabbath Union,” are the two chief conspirators against the liberties of the Nation. These traitors to our country are working diligently for the overthrow of that “justice, domestic tranquility, general welfare and blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity,” which was ordained and established by the Constitution of the United States.

What would be the consequences of their success? Precisely what it has been whenever Christianity has clutched at the throat of the state and made it subservient to the church.

But let these religious bigots speak for themselves, in order that we know definitely their purposes.

The *Christian Reformer* says: “The chief thing for us to do is to *demolish* the secular theory of government and reconstruct the Constitution on a Christian theory.”

Rev. M. A. Gault says: “It cost us all one civil war to blot

slavery out of the Constitution, and it may cost us *another war* to blot out its infidelity.”

Rev. J. W. Foster says : “The state and its sphere exist for the sake of, and to serve the interests of the church.”

Rev. E. B. Graham says : “If the opponents of the Bible do not like our government and its Christian features, let them go to some wild, desolate land, and . . . stay there till they die.”

Rev. Dr. Edwards says : “We want state *and* religion, and we are going to have it. . . . It shall be revealed religion—the religion of Jesus Christ.”

Rev. Samuel Small says : “I want to see the day when the church shall be the arbiter of all legislation, National, State and municipal ; when the great churches of the country can come together harmoniously and issue their edict, and the legislative powers respect it and enact it into law.”

At a meeting of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, at Newburgh, the following resolution was adopted, viz : “That we will endeavor to teach more forcibly the duty of our Nation to God, and the Bible view of civil government, and maintain our political dissent in refusing our elective franchise to put into office men who are bound by their official oaths to support the Constitution of the United States.”

The Protestants are making overtures to the Roman Catholics to co-operate for the purpose of supplanting this Democracy of ours with a Theocracy, forgetful of the fact (which Protestantism has ever claimed) that the Romish Church is symbolized by the *woman of Babylon*, “drunken with the blood of saints.”

But this conspiracy against the Republic and against its more cherished institutions will NEVER succeed. The intelligence of the age, the growth of knowledge, the progress of scientific discoveries, the “higher criticism” of the times, the advance of liberal thought, the love of justice and respect for truth will all work in harmony for the protection and perpetuation of the noblest heritage ever bequeathed to a nation.

The Christian Catilines may succeed in stirring up bitterness, animosities, contentions, strifes, perhaps wars; but the grand principle which underlies all that makes this country the envy of other nations—the principle of the non-union of church and state—is an indestructible and immovable foundation.

Christianity began to manifest its arrogance and malevolence the very day it ascended the throne of the Cæsars. It seemed to have (at once) imbibed the spirit of tyranny and persecution from the murderous despot who was the first to unite the Christian church with the state.

Notwithstanding the atrocious character of Constantine, Christians seem to delight in speaking of him as “the great Christian emperor.”

Had the church never formed the unholy alliance with the state, Christianity would doubtless have remained the simple, practical, beneficent religion that it was when founded by its author, instead of the pretentious, imperious, intolerant, unjust system which it has become.

Speaking of the religious persecutions, and of the wars which for centuries carried terror, desolation and death throughout Europe, Buckle says: “Not one would have arisen if the great truth, that the state had no concern with the opinions of men, had been recognized.”

The late Rev. Philip Schaff, D. D., LL. D., says: “The principle of persecution—to the extent of burning heretics—is *inseparable* from the union of church and state.”

Rev. James M. King says: “Whatever religion has been wedded to the state, individual conscience has been debauched; and a gigantic, tyrannical, political machine has been instituted.”

Bishop Venner says: “The mixing up of politics with religion is fraught with manifold and multiform dangers. . . . There is no tyranny so cruel, no yoke so intolerable, as priestcraft, when vested with temporal power. . . . More political atrocities, butcheries, crimes and enormities have been committed in the name, and on the account, of religion than have arisen from any and *all other causes combined.*”



Dr. McGlynn says : “ The union of church and state means the corruption of both.”

The *Jewish Times* says : “ A careful compilation of sectarian enactments teaches us that religious fanaticism and intolerance injected into politics have united church and state. There is not one of these enactments that may not one day be invoked against citizens who profess the Christian religion. . . . The Adventists, Jews, Agnostics, the great body of the Rationalists at large, have *not* the ‘equal rights’ guaranteed by the Constitution that Christians have.”

The *Western Union* says : “ No religious man can advocate legislative action in behalf of religion *without endangering his own religious liberty.*”

Rev. Dr. Silverman, speaking of the movements in Congress to recognize Christianity in the Constitution, says : “ It may result in using the civil power to make men pray and read the Bible. They tried to benefit society in that way in the middle ages.”

Prof. Francis E. Abbott, editor of the *Index* sounds this note of alarm in the ears of the fanatical traitors who seek to tamper with our Constitution, and thus, perhaps, accomplish the overthrow of the Republic : “ I make no threat whatever, but I state truth, fixed as the hills, when I say that before you carry this measure and trample on the freedom of the people, you will have to *wade through seas of blood*; every man who favors it voted to precipitate the *most frightful war of modern times.*”

It is a singular fact that while, throughout Europe, they are trying to rid themselves of the influence of the church in matters of state, in this country Christian zealots are trying to fasten the church upon the state.

In France, while they are taking the word “God” *out of* their public schools, in this country a set of fanatics are at work to put this word *in* our Constitution.

One word (in conclusion) as to who it is that makes this demand that the Christian church become a partner with the state in administering the government.

It is an anomalous fact that this demand comes mainly from those who *profess* to be believers in "the right of private judgment," but who *practically* deny it.

What *portion* of the people is it that insist that the church shall control the state?

The *New York Evangelist* (edited by Rev. Henry M. Field, D. D.,) says: "Four-fifths (eighty per cent.) of the young men of the country are skeptics."

Henry Ward Beecher said that "*Ninety* per cent. of those engaged in the higher field of research are Agnostics."

Rev. Geo. J. Mings says: "Of the 40,000 people who die every year in New York city, *not ten per cent.* believe in God."

The *Mail and Express* says that in California only *five* per cent. of those between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one years of age ever attend church.

Rev. J. W. Waddell says: "Only *one in ten* of the population of Chicago are Christians."

Dr. Dorchester says that in Colorado only *one in twenty* are Christians; in Nevada, one in forty-six; in Wyoming *one in eighty-one*; in Arizona, *one in 685!*

All of the above are religious (Christian) authority, by which we learn that, probably, *not exceeding ten per cent.* of the people of this country could, by any possibility, be favorable to a system which would accomplish a union of church and state; and yet, owing to their method of organization and facility of co-operation, to their great wealth and (consequent) influence, and to the fear which religion has ever—more or less—influenced and controlled (especially the masses of) the people, this one-tenth of our population has succeeded in gaining the mastery of the nine-tenths.

But this state of things will surely have its limitation. There is growing inquiry among thinking people as to "why religion should any longer claim our allegiance" (to quote the language of John Fiske.)

The theory of evolution has undermined the foundation dogma of the "fall of man;" the criticisms of liberal minded

Christian writers are gradually removing from the blinded eyes of faith all reverence for an untruthful and vulgar Bible.

Christian ministers pronounce the doctrine of the atonement superstitious, if not immoral ; Christianity is discovered to be but an inheritance from older religions ; the term " God " is largely believed to be synonymous with nature.

The dogma of the Trinity obtains the assent of no *thinking* person ; scarcely anyone now believes in endless punishment ; heaven is now said to be a " condition " and not a place.

Surely, with these tendencies to more intelligent thought, the time will come (and in the near future) when those who believe in perpetuating the blessing of a secular government, which its founders bequeathed to us, will celebrate a substantial victory over the wiles of the most unreasoning and unjust enemy with which this country has contended or can contend, viz. : *the Christian church* (or at least that portion of the Christian church which would risk the destruction of this country for the sake of imposing upon its people a series of unprovable and effete dogmas.)

## ABOU BEN ADHEM INGERSOLL.

DEAR MR. GREEN :—I have read, with the greatest interest, the article on page 409 of the July number of your Magazine taken from the *Chicago Tribune* (and which I see is copied in the *N. Y. Telegram* of 5th inst.) giving an account of Frederick Douglass' introduction of Col. Ingersoll on Emancipation day in Washington twelve years ago, when Mr. Douglass, stepping to the front of the platform and discarding the usual formulas of introduction quoted the following lines :—

“ ABOU BEN ADHEM (may his tribe increase !)  
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,  
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,  
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,  
An Angel, writing in a book of gold ;—  
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,  
And to the presence in the room he said,  
'What writest thou?' the vision raised its head,  
And, with a look made of all sweet accord,  
Answered 'The names of those who love the Lord,'  
'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'  
Replied the angel, Abou spoke more low,  
But cheerily still ; and said, ' I pray thee, then,  
Write me as *one that loves his fellow-men.*'

“ The Angel wrote, and vanished. The next night  
It came again with a great wakening light,  
And showed the names whom love of God had bless'd,  
And lo ! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.”

It was a truly graceful, most fitting and well earned tribute from the foremost of those who were emancipated from the

thralldom of bodily slavery to the grandest of those who have fought against both bodily and mental slavery.

Leigh Hunt must have had some such loving nature as that of Col. Ingersoll in his mind when he penned his *ABOU BEN ADHEM*.

I must confess, in reading the article, to having experienced considerable of the emotional, even, almost, to the tearful point.

The appropriateness of Mr. Douglass' introduction of Col. Ingersoll is appreciated by all who know the large heartedness of the latter. He embraces in his love of the human family persons of every color, nationality and creed.

He has his hates, but not for any human being. He hates superstition (supernaturalism) as does every one else who is a thorough believer in natural law.

It is because of his love of his fellow men and his desire for their well-being and happiness that he would fain open the eyes of their understandings to the truth, which is to be found only outside of superstitious beliefs. He would drive the gaunt spectre of fear from every hearthstone. He would (to quote his own words) "take from the cradle its curse and from the coffin its terror;" and in place of sadness and mournfulness, which these beliefs occasion, he would substitute hope, trust, harmony and all the reasonable pleasures of life.

As Edgar Fawcett has expressed it in his ode to Ingersoll, (in the *Arena*, December, 1893.)

"For thy soul in its large love of man,  
In its heed of his welfare and cheer,  
Bids him hurl to the dust whence they spring,  
All idolatries fashioned by fear."

Like Voltaire, Col. Ingersoll's intellectual greatness is much lost sight of in the bigotry of ecclesiasticism; and, like Thomas Paine, his services to his country and to humanity, to principle, to justice and to truth, are largely forgotten in the prejudice which an unreasoning belief in tradition, legend, fable and miracle engenders.

No man lives who has made greater sacrifices for what he conscientiously believed to be true. There is scarcely any position to which he might not have attained had he subscribed to a theology which his intelligence had rejected.

I believe that, in the generations to come, of all the grand characters who have marked epochs in history, who have striven to elevate the condition of their fellow-men, and who, by brilliancy of thought, kindly utterance, convincing logic, beauty of imagery and inspiring eloquence, have impressed their worth and greatness on the world of intelligence, none will stand out in bolder relief than that of Col. Robert G. Ingersoll.

I lent the magazine to my friend and Col. Ingersoll's friend, Frederick Taylor, who, being an orator himself, knows what oratory is. He sent me the enclosed letter in reply.

Yours truly,

HENRY M. TABER.

*New York, July 8, 1895.*

FROM FREDERICK TAYLOR.

NEW YORK, June 6, 1895.

DEAR MR. TABER:—I have read the article to which you called my attention and enjoyed it immensely. The incident was certainly delightful and I do not wonder that the great orator was "visibly affected." It reminds me of another occasion in his career,—when one of the greatest orators that ever lived, Henry Ward Beecher, facing an audience of thousands in the city of Brooklyn, introduced Col. Ingersoll in these words:—

*"Fellow Citizens:—I now have the pleasure to introduce to you the best talker of the English language on the globe, my friend Col. Robert G. Ingersoll."* Yours truly,

FRED. TAYLOR.

## IMMORTALITY.

“The cradle asks whence; the coffin asks whither!”—*Ingersoll*.

“To die and go—we know not where.”—*Measure for Measure*.

“If a man die, shall he live again?”—*Job, xiv: 14*.

THE New York *Morning Advertiser* recently opened its columns to the discussion of the question, “Is the soul immortal?” For several weeks it printed daily many letters on the subject, which expressed the greatest variety of opinion. It was a courageous act of the editors, for it doubtless met the frowns of very many of its orthodox readers, who would gladly have ignored or suppressed any such discussion, and some of whom, I doubt not, “boycotted” the paper in consequence of permitting it.

But why should not intelligent thought exercise itself on so momentous a question as to whether man has a soul and as to whether it is, or is not, immortal.

The freedom of opinion on this, and on kindred subjects, cannot have too wide a latitude.

Every one should have a right to express any opinion which may be honestly held, without fear of the displeasure of those who are zealous in defence of the

“Unquestioned faith, unvitalized by thought,”

of their mother’s religion.

I maintain, though, that (if Spiritualists, who believe in ghosts and doubtless think they have evidence of their existence, be excepted) no one has the right to claim the possession of absolute knowledge as to what is called the soul, or spirit of man; for how is it possible for any one to know positively anything about it, about its present or future exist-

ence? Not till we have tidings from that "undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveler returns" can we know anything of another life.

Prof. Max Muller says: "We possess to-day no more materials for the satisfactory treatment of this problem (the present or future existence of a soul) than did the sages of Egypt, Palestine, India, Persia and Greece."

Lazarus is reported to have been dead many days and, presumably, to have had experience in a future life (if there be one.) If he had such experience, did he give his fellow man the benefit of that experience?

John Fiske says: "It is not likely that we shall ever succeed in making the immortality of the soul a matter of scientific demonstration, for the lack of requisite data. It must ever remain an affair of religion, rather than of science."

The late Prof. Proctor says: "Herbert Spencer shows abundantly the nothingness of the evidence on which the common belief in a future life has been based."

"The only basis for our faith in immortality must be found in revelation."—Prest. Barnard of Columbia College, New York City.

Rev. Minot J. Savage says: "Have we any proof of immortality? . . . I cannot think we have anything which may be called evidence concerning an immortal life. . . . Immortality is not susceptible of proof."

The *Christian Register* of April 7, 1887, gives the opinion of various scientists on the question of immortality, among others that of Prof. E. S. Moore, viz.: "I have never seen anything in the discoveries of science which could in the slightest degree support a belief in immortality."

Tyndall says: "Divorced from matter, where is life to be found?"

Haeckel says: "We can as little think of an individual soul, separated from our brain, as we can conceive of the voluntary motion of our arm apart from the contraction of its muscles, or the circulation of our blood apart from the action of the heart."



Rev. R. Heber Newton says : " We know nothing of life that is disembodied. . . . We know nothing of mind apart from matter. . . . I have no confidence in any faith which is not capable of a scientific basis."

" I do not deny immortality as a Christian—I only deny it as a philosopher."—Pompanazzi.

Whittier would peer into what may possibly be beyond this life, but is compelled to say :

" Death comes—life goes—the asking eye  
And ear are answerless ;  
The grave is dumb, the hollow sky  
Is sad with silentness."

" We do not know whether death is a door or wall ; a spreading of pinions or the folding forever of wings."—Ingersoll.

Every argument in favor of immortality is based on the (utterly improbable) supposition that Jesus Christ actually rose from the dead and that he ascended to heaven. The belief in the resurrection of Christ, and of the other dead is interdependent upon the truth of either—if we are to accept the statement which Paul makes in Cor. xv. 16: 17, viz. : " If the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised. If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain."

But let us refer to the bible for proof that many of the writers in it were actual *disbelievers*\* in a future life. Solomon says : " They—the sons of men—are but as beasts, for that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth the beasts. As the one dieth, so dieth the other. Yea, they have all one breath and man hath no pre-eminence over the beasts. The dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward."

Job says : " As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more."

Isaiah says : " They are dead, they shall not live ; they are deceased, they shall not rise."

Paul says : " God *only* hath immortality."

The Bible is quoted from for evidence on this question by both believers and non-believers in immortality—as the Bible has always been appealed to by both the advocates and opponents of slavery, of temperance and of polygamy. Of course in so contradictory a book it is easy to find texts in support of either side of any of these questions.

Even if there be such a place as heaven, and even if all go to it, what assurance have we of it being any better than the present life? Why should we not expect the same contentions, strifes and conflicts there that exist here? for what has been may again occur, and we have the Bible as authority for such supposition, it telling us that once “there was war in heaven.”

If the doctrine of immortality be true where are the billions on billions of souls which are supposed to have passed from the earth? Where is heaven? How many souls is it capable of containing? Where is hell? What is its capacity as regards accommodation for a far larger number of souls than become inhabitants of heaven? In view of the probability of others of our planets being inhabited, and of the further probability that every star has also a planetary system, teeming with life, somewhat, perhaps like that which exists here, it may again be asked where is the abode of the future life, and what are its capabilities for the incalculable number of souls, which, according to the Christian religion are engaged continually, in singing, “Glory hallelujah, and of playing upon golden harps in the one place and of writhing in hopeless and eternal agony in the other?

A great variety of opinions exist on the subject of immortality. Some believe that only a few have eternal life and others that all have it. Some that the future life has no end, others that it is restricted in duration. Some that (what is called) the soul, immediately ascends to the heavenly abode, or enters the place of eternal torment. Others that it sleeps between death and resurrection. Some that it passes through a purgatorial state; others that it is transmigratory. Some that it is an immaterial; others that it is a material soul. Some believe in a separate, distinct, identical spirit; others in absorp-

tion into universal spirit. Some say that heaven is a place, others that it is a condition.

Immortality is a conception of the brain regarding a future life for what is called the breath, spirit, soul, mind, intelligence, consciousness, animation or psychic force. There is no consensus of opinion, no definite idea regarding it.

It is a curious fact that those who profess belief in immortality, in a life of the most perfect joy, of infinite bliss, and who regard themselves as "poor worms of the dust," (or who say they do), and who call this life a "vale of tears," are in no hurry whatever to change it for the "better world."

"I have been struck with the fact that even those who have put their trust in the teachings of a future life, find that it has failed to give satisfaction in the hour of trial."—Rev. M. J. Savage.

If those who claim that they believe in a glorious immortality actually did believe in it, why should they not welcome death as a means by which they can enter the incomparable realms of felicity?

"Were the soul immortal, would the mind  
Complain of death, and not rejoice to find  
Itself let loose, and leave this clay behind?"

Herodotus says: "The Egyptians were the first who asserted the doctrine that the soul of man is immortal."

The Greeks had their Elysium where "the righteous dead inherit a tearless eternity." But the majority of educated people, of classical antiquity, especially during the highest period in Greek culture, had but little faith in the doctrine of personal immortality.

The Scandinavians had their Walhalla "where fallen heroes were, and where the favorite horse and armor were ever ready for use."

The doctrine of immortality does not appear in the earlier accounts of Jewish history. "He slept with his fathers" is all that is said of the dead of that period.

Bishop Warburton says: "Moses failed to teach belief in a future life."

Rev. Dr. Charles A. Briggs says : "There is no evidence to show that in old Testament times, there was any thought that there was everlasting life then for the individual."

Rabbi Vidaver says : "The resurrection of the dead and future reward and punishment are neither mentioned or even hinted at in any of the five books of Moses."

It was not till five hundred years after Moses (or one thousand years before Christ) that the idea of resurrection began to be entertained by the Jews, and then rather in a national than in a personal sense. The book of Daniel was written about 165 B. C., and in it is the first trace of the doctrine of immortality in the Bible.

Bishop Tileston says : "The immortality of the soul is rather supposed or taken for granted, than expressly revealed in the Bible."

It is interesting to inquire as to what period in the process of evolution—from monera to man—did our ancestors become possessed of a soul (if such there be). Was it anterior to, or succeeding, the anthropoid state, or was it a gift to the dwellers in caves, or to the more advanced in civilized life? Who can tell? Is the soul an ante-natal or a post-natal acquisition? Who knows?

It is usual to speak of the human body as mortal, and of the soul (or spirit, or breath, or mind) as immortal. In the evolutionary process of nature from the dissolution of the body in the earth, giving vitality to vegetable growths, and these again to the sustenance of animal life and so on through infinity (so far as we may know) is it not more reasonable to believe that the body through these natural processes continuously perpetuating life, becomes, in a certain sense, *immortal*? While the breath or spirit, ceasing to exist, at least apparently so, when separated from the body, is, therefore, the mortal part of man?

Büchner, in his "Force and Matter," says : "The phrases 'mortal body' and 'immortal spirit' are misnomers. Exact thought might possibly reverse the adjectives."

The doctrine of a future state of existence is claimed by

Orthodox Christianity to be a comforting one. Is it comforting to believe in a doctrine that (according to Burns) "Sends one to heaven and ten to hell," and all for "God's Glory?"

The Nirvana of Buddhism, with its eternal and peaceful slumber, is a transcendently more comforting belief.

Rev. W. S. Rainsford, D. D., of New York City, says: "I would rather believe in annihilation than eternal punishment. The latter is damnable."

"I would rather know that all the earth  
That every source of joy, of love or mirth,  
And every thing of life, that loved the light,  
Would sleep forever in eternal night,  
Than think one soul on which the light of reason fell,  
Should suffer torment in a Christian hell."

Prof. Haeckel says: "The idea that a conviction of personal immortality has a specially ennobling influence on the moral nature of man is not confirmed by the gruesome history of medieval morals."

Rev. John W. Chadwick, of Brooklyn, says: "Nothing is more common than for men to talk as if the idea of immortality had always been a source of comfort to mankind. But, so far as comfort is concerned, humanity would have been much better off without it. . . To discourage thought, to encourage general immorality, was the natural operation of the idea of a future life, as cherished throughout Christendom. . . Never has civilized society attained to lower depths of degradation than in those Christian centuries when the felicities of heaven and the agonies of hell were no mere figures of rhetoric, but were felt to be as real as the tortures of the Inquisition. . . The hope of heaven or fear of hell withholds no dagger from its work, palsies no arm upraised to shoot a foe, quenches no flame of lawless passion, arrests no hand intent to forge or steal, keeps back no slander of the innocent and chokes no conscious villain with his perjury. . . It would seem that every thoughtful person must, at one time or another, in these later times, have thought, with painful earnestness, how different might have been this earth-bound world,

if all, or even half, of the intellectual and emotional energy that has been spent upon another life had been spent on *this*. Why, in that case we should have had a real heaven here. . . . A salvation *for the present life*, in contradistinction from the popular salvation—from the penal tortures of a state beyond the grave—is a salvation infinitely greater than that of the great leading sects of Christendom; a salvation *now and here*. . . . *Now* is the judgment of this world and we propose to do what seems best *now and here*. . . . Let those who will, fling off their hats for the expounders of the creed of *other* worldliness, but be it our task and joy to set our faces, as a flint, against these things and by speech and pen and life to counteract, as far as in us lies, their baneful influence.”

There are but comparatively few *unbiased thinkers* who believe in the doctrine of immortality, and the number of those so believing is steadily diminishing.

At a recent gathering in Germany, consisting of seven hundred scientists, *not one* of that number believed in immortality.

It is claimed that because man has a *hope* of a blissful future life, *therefore* such life is assured. If hopes were, then, realizations, we would be surfeited with the realizations of the heart's desires; but we know, from the constant disappointments which our hopes experience, that this claim is most illusory.

John Stuart Mill says: “The desire for future life is no more an argument that there will be a future life than is the desire for food an argument that we shall be fed in a future life.”

Another claim is that because immortality has been a belief in almost every past age, *therefore* we should give credence to it now. In past ages there were believers in the fables of the Bible, in witchcraft, in demonism, in a false Astronomy, geology and biology. If the argument that immortality must be true because of its having had believers in the days of antiquity, then, by a parity of reason, we should still believe in the effete tenets and pseudo-science of ancient times.

While scholars, thinkers, scientists, reject the doctrine of immortality, as not being probable or even, perhaps, possible,

for the want of satisfactory evidence, there is a natural, even if unreasonable, longing of the heart to again meet with those dear ones who have been snatched from our embrace by the rude and unsympathetic hand of death. Something of this yearning is expressed in words, the beauty and pathos and sublimity of which has, probably, no parallel in the English or any other language, viz.: "The idea of immortality, that like a sea has ebbed and flowed in the human heart, with its countless waves of hope and fear beating against the shores and rocks of time and fate, was not born of any book, nor of any creed, nor of any religion. It was born of human affection, and it will continue to ebb and flow, beneath the mists and clouds of doubt and darkness, as long as love kisses the lips of death. It is the rainbow—Hope, shining upon the tears of grief."—Col. Robert G. Ingersoll.

But there is an immortality for great thoughts, for good deeds, for noble aspirations, for heroism, for philanthropic and beneficent acts; and there is an immortality for the names of those who have done what they could to encourage whatever tended to make the human family wiser and better, to encourage whatever contributed to the intellectual development, to the material prosperity and to the general happiness of mankind. There is, indeed, immortality for

"those immortal dead who live again  
 In minds made better by their presence; live  
 In pulses stirred to generosity,  
 In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn  
 Of miserable aims that end in self;  
 In thoughts sublime, that pierce the night like stars,  
 And with their mild persistence urge men's minds  
 To vaster issues. . . . .

*This is the life to come."*

And in this "life to come" will be perpetuated the achievements, and the names, of such benefactors of the race as Bruno, Shakespeare, Gibbon, Copernicus, Newton, Darwin, Voltaire, Paine and Ingersoll.

## LIBERALIZED CHRISTIANITY.

THERE is no more patent fact observable than that a great change has come over the " Spirit " of the Christian Church within the past half century, with reference to its beliefs and its tolerance of the opinions of others.

It (the church) has discovered that Agnosticism, and (what the church has inappropriately and with offensive intent termed) Infidelity, are merely expressions of honest opinions on the part of others, and that such opinions are entitled to consideration and respect.

It has evinced a disinclination to insist on dogma, a willingness to investigate and profit by the results of such investigation, to accept the discoveries of science, to seek for truth (even at the risk of parting with some of its cherished dogmas).

It has learned to advocate justice in such matters for instance as pertain to questions relating to the separation of church and state.

It has also learned that of the writings called the " gospels," instead of their being but four, there were more than a hundred times that number, all just as much entitled to the claim of " inspiration " as those attributed to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

It has further learned that a high stage of civilization existed long before the time when Adam and Eve were supposed to be created.

It manifests greater interest in the practical, humanitarian and ethical questions of the day and correspondingly less interest in its tenets ; it seems disposed to relinquish its claim that morality exists only in Christianity ; it yields (more or



less) to the higher criticism " regarding the authorship of the Bible and its (dubious) claim for inspiration, and is disposed to admit that it (the Bible) is (possibly) contradictory, unreliable and (perhaps) immoral ; it shows a tendency to listen to the voice of reason and to question that of revelation ; to pay more and better attention to the certainties of this life and less to the uncertainties (and improbabilities) of another life.

It has its doubts of miracles ; it inclines, more than ever, to believe in natural, instead of unnatural, law ; it is questioning the efficacy and the logic of prayer ; it almost universally abandons belief in hell ; it queries as to whether heaven is a place or a condition ; it questions as to whether God is a personality, an immanency or a transcendency.

It has been, and is, growing daily more rational, more disposed to accept reality and fact and truth for tradition and legend and fable, to regard as allegorical what is improbable or impossible ; it rejects belief in the Methuselah and similar stories of the prolongation of human life ; it interprets the " days " of Genesis as " epochs of time."

It has learned, that its religion has evolved from anterior religions, that all its ceremonies, rites, symbols, customs and beliefs are those of more ancient times ; that its god is but another name for some one of the divinities before whom the adherents of every other religion have bowed down and worshiped ; that the deification, immaculate conception, and virgin birth of the founder of Christianity has its parallel in religions which existed prior to the Christian era, that its crucified saviour is but one of sixteen other crucified saviours of former ages ; that its doctrine of the Trinity, its belief in heaven, in hell, in immortality, in a personal devil, all existed in the religions of earlier times.

It (the Church), in analyzing the genealogy of Christ, discovers that—if Matthew's and Luke's record be true—there is nothing mysterious about the birth of Christ, and that Joseph was as truly his father as was Mary his mother. This fact is further confirmed by recently discovered writings, such for in-

stance, as those written in the Syrian language and found in a cloister on Mount Sinai, and which are about to be translated into English by Cambridge University. Christians are also awakening to the fact that it is impossible for them to find the slightest authority for the religious observance of Sunday. Bishop Potter of New York—in the *Forum* for Oct., 1892—distinctly says that there is no warrant for such observance. Week after week the clergy of a generation ago preached what are known as “doctrinal sermons,” but which are now scarcely ever heard. The common sense of educated Christians is opposed to the improbabilities—the absurdities—of Christian dogma. Rev. Dr. Parkhurst, Presbyterian of New York, does not hesitate to pronounce the creed of his church “a horrible doctrine.”

The ministry has been forced by the advanced thought of both pew and pulpit to select subjects to discourse upon which are more in accord with the enlightened ideas which are everywhere met with outside of church circles.

The very foundation of Christian faith—the doctrine of “the fall of man” is yielding to the newly discovered truth of the *rise* of man, which the theory of evolution is inculcating, and which theory—with all its destructive consequences to Christian doctrine—is being widely adopted by the clergy and other Professors of Christianity and with the abandonment of the doctrine of “Original Sin,” that of the atonement necessarily follows; for if there be no fall of man—no Original Sin—there can be no need of an atonement, there being no act for which to atone; again, many of the clergy, heretofore supposed to entertain orthodox views, are now thorough disbelievers in the doctrine of hell; and if there be no hell to be saved from, the inquiry naturally suggests itself what significance can there be in the word “Salvation,” and, further, why, or what can be the office—or need of—a Saviour.

All these Church dogmas are so linked together that if one in the chain drops out there is wanting a unity and a strength which is essential to the very existence of the Christian religion, as a whole.

As illustrating and emphasizing and confirming what has been said above regarding the spirit of toleration and the liberalizing tendency of Christianity the following quotations may be adduced :

The late Bishop Phillips Brooks in his book on *Tolerance*, says : "Tolerance is the willing consent that other men should hold and express opinions with which we disagree. . . . One of the worst things about *intolerance* is that it puts an end to manly controversy."

His brother, the Rev. Arthur Brooks, D. D., says : "The college must be open to men who say daring things. . . . The faculty should not tell a man that he must go out as soon as he begins to think."

Bishop Potter says : "We want defenders of the Church's liberty as well as of the Church's orthodoxy."

Rev. James Freeman Clarke says : "The time has come when Unitarians and Universalists can no longer monopolize the title of liberal and rational Christians. . . . There are many hopeful signs of progress and improvement in the Christian Church. In New York, for example, appear every week two newspapers, the *Independent* and the *Christian Union*, both nominally orthodox, edited in the interest of a free, broad, practical and generous Christianity."

Rev. H. W. Mabie, of the *Outlook*, says : "Religious questions press for answer on all sides. The part of leadership is resolutely to treat the new inquiries, not as evidence of the prevalence of sin, but as signs of a quickening of life . . . to look for re-statements and re-adjustments."

Rev. Francis Brown, Professor in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary at New York says : "It is a great pity to be afraid of facts," and makes admissions, which, "but a short time before, would have filled orthodoxy with horror."

The eminent English divine, Rev. Dr. Mills, calls attention to the now undoubted and long suspected fact that "it pleased the divine power to reveal some of the most important articles of our Catholic creed *first* to the Zoroasterians."

Huc and Gabert, French priests (in disguise) penetrated to

the interior of China and brought to the world's notice an amazing similarity of ideas, institutions, observances, ceremonies, ritual, and ecclesiastical costumes of the Buddhists to those of his own Church.

Rev. Dr. Briggs says: "I rejoice at this age of rationalism, with all its wonderful achievements in philosophy. . . . Investigation must go on. It matters little how many oppose it. It may delay the end, it cannot prevent it. It may make investigation a holy war and the establishment of its results a catastrophe to the faith and life of its opponents, but the normal development of investigation is the calm, steady, invincible march of science."

The *Sunday Oregonian* says, with reference to Professor Briggs criticism of the Bible: "It is impossible to stay the tide. Men, in increasing numbers, insist on treating religion rationally, or dealing with the Bible on ordinary principles of literary interpretation. More and more it is coming to be understood that the whole history of man is regular and orderly, without special revelations, without miraculous interpolations, of divine Providence. The thought of our time is rapidly clearing religion of the crudities it borrowed from those ages in which there was no scientific observation."

Rev. Dr. R. Heber Newton says: "No man can be found, who thinks at all, who is not heretical upon some point of the Westminster confession. These grounds of faith Dr. Briggs has pluckily and ably contested. . . . Heresy hunters as a rule, are not disarmed by the force of reasoning. They are hardened, not softened, by the warm light of truth. They are not more inclined toward peace when they discover their mistakes, but are often made the madder thereby. . . . New found knowledge compel the re-study of the dogmas and institutions of the church in the light of historic criticism and comparative religion. . . . Reason must be the bed-rock of our faith, and Bible and Church alike rest on it. Only by reason can records of revelation and Church philosophies be tested satisfactorily."

“In the religion of the future there will be no orthodoxy and no heresy.”—Rev. M. J. Savage.

The late Rev. Dr. Philip Schaff pronounces heresy trials, in the present day, anachronisms.

Rabbi Schaufarber of Baltimore, says : “We have lived in the past long enough. It is time that we be of the present. Too long has Biblical authority been placed above scientific truth.”

Rev. Dr. Rylance, of St. Mark’s church, N. Y., says : “We shall have Ingersolls, with their denunciations of the Bible, as long as our preachers and teachers so generally make a fetish of the book ; till they can cease from sanctioning the silly notion of what they call ‘ plenary ’ or ‘ verbal ’ inspiration ; till they perceive that it contains some things that belong to the moral infancy of mankind, which the Christian intelligence and conscience cannot approve.”

Rev. Dr. S. D. McConnell, Rector of St. Stephen’s church, Philadelphia, argues that “ people no longer believe the Bible to be a transcript of God’s revelation . . . Discredit is thrown on the theory of a literal inspiration by the investigations and discoveries of modern scholars.”

Dr. Harper, President of the great Baptist University at Chicago, denounces the Bible as full of errors.

The Hulsean Professor of Divinity at the University of Cambridge declares : “ No attempt at reconciling Genesis with the exacting requirements of modern science has ever been known to succeed without entailing a degree of special pleading or forced interpretation, to which, in such a question, we should be wise to have no recourse.”

John Wm. Colenso, late Bishop of Natal, in translating the book of Genesis, says : “ Is all that true? . . . Shall a man speak lies in the name of the Lord? I dare not do so. . . . Would it not be well to eliminate from the Bible whatever is untruthful and immoral?”

Rev. Dr. Leighton Parks, of Boston, says : “ The higher criticism is as distinctly a new science as modern chemistry and

to appeal from it to tradition is to appeal from knowledge to hearsay."

Rev. Dr. Chas. C. Tiffany, of N. Y., says: "I would not be in favor of dismissing a Professor, who has ideas out of the common run, on the plea that anything of that kind would be hurtful to the student. . . . There will always be new ideas."

"It is a shame for the Presbyterian or any other church to shut a man's mouth by force or by ballot."—(Rev. J. E. Sertz.)  
 "We cannot stifle free thought and candid criticism."—(Rev. Jas. Hoadley.)

Rev. C. D. Bartol, in the *New World* of March, 1893, says: "The breaking up of sects before the light of knowledge, as of ice-bound streams under the rays of the sun, proves our inability to judge where it will stop. Orthodoxy, Episcopacy, the Presbytery and Catholicity—so called—cannot withstand the intellectual flow, by which they are all shaken and rent.

"The old time churchman hated to challenge belief: the modern liberal churchman halts the old creeds to see if they square with modern religious consciousness."

Professor St. George Mivart says: "Religion is worth nothing in my eyes, as a mere sentiment or taste, unsupported by calm and solemn reason."

Rev. Dr. Edward Beecher thus protests against continued belief in an effete theology: "During the whole course of seven years study, the Protestant candidate for the ministry sees before him an unauthorized statement—spiked down and stereotyped—of what he must find in the Bible, or be martyred. . . . Liberty of opinion, in our theological seminaries, is a mere form."

Rev. Dr. George H. Hepworth (in the *N. Y. Herald* of Sept. 22, '95,) says: "Men are thinking along new lines, while the Church still thinks along the old lines. We have very little regard for theological dogmas. . . . The world has an increasing distrust of the efficacy of religious forms and ceremonials and creeds."

Rev. Edward Everitt Hale thus criticises the bigotry and

hypocrisy of the different Christian churches : "What is the moral attitude of a church which deliberately says that certain lines of inquiry shall not be pursued? What is the attitude of the Roman church which publishes a list of books which shall not be read? What is the attitude of the Methodist church which has been turning professors out of its southern colleges because they assented to the doctrine of evolution? What is the attitude of the Episcopal church, which, while it claims all the advantages of a creed, offers you two and tells you that you may pick and choose? We can understand the position of a church which binds no man to a written creed."

Rev. E. P. Powell (in the *Arena*, Nov., 1893,) says : "The 'age of reason' grows mild and mellow in the light of controversies which now agitate theology."

Rev. John W. Chadwick, of Brooklyn, says : "Certainly I am not a Christian, if in order to be one, it is necessary to swallow a prescribed dose of beliefs, the ingredients of which have not been, and cannot be, analyzed."

In the *Arena*, for September, 1895, Rev. Charles Strong, D. D., of Melbourne, says : "Doubt the infallibility of the story of creation and what becomes of the popular doctrine of the fall of man, and the vast superstructure raised on this story by theologians. Take away the eternal hell to which the whole human race is (supposed to be) naturally doomed and the whole system crumbles into dust. To try to reconcile it with the modern study of history, the teachings of science or the new ideal, is like trying to reconcile the Ptolemic with the Copernican theory of the solar system.

The popular theology depends upon the hypothesis of an absolutely infallible church—or book, which—as far as we can see is swept clean away by a knowledge of facts."

Rev. Samuel R. Calthrop says : "The fall of man is the foundation of theology ; for had there been no fall, there would have been no redemption ; if no redemption, then no Christ, no death on the cross, no resurrection, no atonement, and no salvation by belief in such atonement."

Huxley says : "If the story of the fall is not the true re-

cord of an historical occurrence, what becomes of Pauline theology?"

Rev. Alfred Momerie, (an English clergyman) says: "I am bound to believe that there are men . . . who, with no conscious faith in God, are yet living noble, useful, self-denying lives; spending and being spent for others; taking the most enthusiastic interest in all that concerns the well being of their fellow men."

Rev. R. S. McArthur, D. D., of N. Y. City, says: "A great change within the past few years has come over the spirit and methods of our churches. This change has been gradual in its approach, but none the less significant in its reality, the pulpit now, as perhaps never before, believes in and illustrates the value of *applied* Christianity. True Christians show their Christianity, not so much by professing an orthodox creed, as by living pure, unselfish, patriotic and godly lives."

Rev. David H. Greer, D. D., of N. Y., says: "There certainly is a strong tendency upon the part of the church to-day to emphasize conduct rather than dogma. . . . With this tendency I am in full sympathy and regard it as one of the hopeful signs of the times that it is asserting itself so strongly."

Rev. Mark Hopkins, D. D., says: "Men are born nominal Christians. The truth of the religion is taken for granted, nothing leads them to question or examine it. . . . In the matter of evidences of Christianity we should hold ourselves in the position of an impartial jury. . . . I believe in no religion that is not supported by historical proof."

The late Dr. McCosh (President of Princeton College) says: "People must judge of a supposed scientific theory, not from the faith or unbelief of its discoverer, but from the evidences in its behalf."

Benjamin Kidd, in his *Social Evolution*, says: "Within the churches one of the signs of change is visible in a growing tendency to assert that religion is concerned with man's actual



state in this world, as well as with his *possible* state in the next."

On all sides there is evidently a disposition to loosen the bonds of creed and unlock the shackles of dogma."—*N. Y. Advertiser*.

Rev. Dr. Austin Phelps, of Andover, says: "Modern infidelity is an intellectual giant, in comparison with anything in the records of the past. It is learned in resources, well informed in Christian argument, self-possessed and withal morally earnest in spirit. . . . It is time to cease confounding Infidelity with depravity. We should have done with the stories of infidel death-beds. For the purpose for which they are commonly used all pith has been taken out of them by the testimony of intelligent physicians."

Rev. E. P. Foster (*Arena*, Oct. 1891) says: "It is ten thousand times better, yea, ten thousand times ten thousand, to be an honest Infidel than a hypocritical believer."

Rev. Dr. T. DeWitt Talmage makes the following admissions: "It is easy to have one's faith destroyed. I can give you a receipt for it. Read infidel books; have long and frequent conversations with sceptics; attend the lectures of those antagonistic to religion. It is easy to banish soon and forever all respect for the Bible. I prove by the fact that *so many* have done it." *It is well known that sceptics are everywhere.*

In the *Forum* for June, 1892, is an article by President Hyde, of Bowdoin College, entitled, "Impending Paganism in New England," giving statistics showing great falling off of church attendance and adding, "Financially the churches are on the verge of bankruptcy. The church is supported principally by a club of women, not by families and men."

In New York city not one-half of the churches exist to-day—in proportion to population—that existed fifty years ago. The annual gain in membership is but a little over 1 per cent. and of this not one-quarter are males.

Rev. W. S. Rainsford, Rector of St. George's Episcopal church, New York City, says: "It is generally recognized now that the proper work of the church is not to defend dogma,

but to lay down, as a basis of man's society, friendship, sympathy and love." *and the cause of your people*

Dr. Rainsford also rebukes those who dishonestly represent the strength of the Christian church, thus: "I know the census and the figures which show the increase of church attendance, during the past ten or fifteen years, but the common people are getting further and further away from the church. Hundreds of thousands who never darken the doors of a church are set down as church members.

"In the census returns many persons are counted over and over again. I myself know one man who is set down as an attendant by *seven* different churches."

Rev. Dr. W. Robertson Nicoll, of the *British Weekly*, says: "The pleasant fiction that church members do not go to the theatre can no longer be kept up."

Farrar's *Critical History of Free Thought*, embracing his eight Bampton lectures delivered in 1862, is an interesting account of what he speaks of as "the struggle of the human spirit to free itself from the authority of the Christian faith." He says: "Bigotry is founded on ignorance and fear. . . . We stand in the presence of forms of doubt which press us more nearly than those of former times. . . . When the church has attempted to fetter human thought, it has been to *free* thought that we owe the emancipation of the human mind. . . . Doubt is reawakened by the introduction of new forms of knowledge. . . . The controversy with heresy or unbelief has caused truths to be perceived explicitly. . . . The use of doubt is to test all beliefs. . . . The unbelief of the present day is marked by a show of fairness."

Since these lectures were delivered, the Archdeacon has still further advanced in liberal thought and bold utterance, so much so as to expose himself to the wrath of the orthodox; and which has elicited from him such defiant language as that "no amount of theological hatred, no fear of persecution and no hope of reward will ever make me deflect the tenth part of an inch from the statement of anything which I hold to be true."

The Archdeacon in speaking of Calvinism says its dogmas are met by the "execrations of mankind."

Rev. T. P. Sawin, Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Troy, N. Y., says: "I do not wish to be known as a Calvinist. I do not like the idea of Calvinism. Calvin was a murderer and a scoundrel." *at our altar*

Rev. Dr. Tyler says: "A Christianity that is so intent on saving the soul from a burning bottomless hell, as to forget or be indifferent to the physical discomfort and sufferings of men, is not, whatever else it may be, the Christianity of Christ."

Rev. John Rippere (Methodist) of Brooklyn, says: "If the standards of the Methodist Church are right, nine-tenths of the members are going to hell."

Bishop Foster says: "If I was compelled to think my God, whom I worship, would, by any possible method of administration, send down to a hopeless eternity twelve hundred millions of my brethren and save a few of us, who are but a little better, perhaps, in our moral fiber, I would not go to heaven if I could. I would not worship such a God as that. I would join all the hosts of hell in rebellion against such a God."

Rev. Dr. Rossiter W. Raymond says: "I am sick and tired of going to the American Board on sufferance to aid in supporting missionaries who believe out and out in the damnation of all the heathen. . . . I am tired of the whole miserable humbug. . . . I won't let the damnation doctrine be disseminated with my money. . . . It is my Christian duty not to give to any concern that teaches the heathen that their fathers went to hell."

For many years Congress appropriated money, for the religious teaching of the Indians, to the various Christian sects, (more than two millions of dollars in nine years). As an indication of the advance of justice in the church, it may be stated that one by one the Protestant churches have refused to accept their share of the apportionment.

The wrong of compelling support to the churches has been widely rebuked by justice-loving Christians and others.

Rev. Dr. Hawthorne, of Atlanta, Ga., expressed himself in

unqualified language against appropriations of money for religious purposes, against exempting church property from taxation, against the employment of chaplains by the government, speaking of them as violations "of the laws of religious liberty, because it compels the Jew, the Atheist, and the Deist to contribute to the support of a religion which they repudiate." Dr. Hawthorne also denounces the movement to secure the Christianization of the Constitution and the acts of the American Protective Association.

Rabbi Caro of Milwaukee says: "As a check upon Ecclesiasticism, I am for the taxation of all church property. The state has no right to tax one man for the purpose of propagating another man's religion."

Rev. E. D. Huntley, Rev. James Churm, Rev. Herman Burns, Rev. C. S. Haack and others of the Milwaukee clergy have expressed views similar to those of Rabbi Caro.

"The Ministers' Association of the United Presbyterian Church, at their October meeting in Pittsburg, debated the question of church exemption from taxation and decided that such exemption is wrong."—*Truth Seeker*, Dec. 8, 1897.

Our Sunday laws are meeting the righteous condemnation of the generous hearted and liberal minded of the Christian church.

The N. Y. *Examiner* (Baptist), alluding to the imprisonment of reputable citizens in Tennessee and in Maryland by reason of their (infamous) Sunday laws—in the one case for working in the fields and in the other for husking corn in a barn, on Sunday, says, "We wonder that the stones do not cry out against such travesties of justice and that Christian men do not lift up their voices in protest against this wicked perversion of religion; this insult to the name of Christ."

Rev. Dr. Rylance speaks of the "traditions and dogmas touching the Sabbath once believed to be direct and unquestionably from God, but now discredited in the estimation of all men who know what they are talking about."

The Sunday newspaper is now being encouraged and utilized for the dissemination of *non*-sectarian and *non*-doctrinal re-

ligion, by the "Newspaper Sermon Association," a Massachusetts corporation, controlled by Christian clergymen.

The Christian church teaches that there are but four gospels, but Dean Alford says: "There are more than five hundred of these manuscripts, of various ages, from the fourth to the fifteenth century."

Andrew D. White, LL. D., late president of Cornell University, says: "The civilization of Egypt began earlier than the time assigned for the creation of man," and in *Popular Science Monthly* for Aug., 1895, shows the advance made in this century (mostly in the last half of it) in liberal thought among the clergy of Germany, Holland and England. In the latter country the struggle for broader church views (as against the traditional religion) led by Reverend Drs. Temple, Jowett, Rowland, Williams, Baden Powell, H. B. Wilson, Mark Pattison, Bishops Tait and Thirlwall and Lord High Chancellor Westbury, was successful to a most encouraging degree. An epitaph on the latter reads: "He abolished . . . the eternity of punishment. He dismissed hell with costs, and took away from orthodox members of the Church of England their last hope of everlasting damnation."

In the Sept. No. of *Popular Science Monthly*, Dr. White calls attention to the "higher criticism," as indulged in a generation ago—"then so daring; now so widespread"—and beginning with Bishop Colenso and the result of his studies of the Old Testament and his discovery that "in all the books there is much that is mythical and legendary," Dr. White shows what has been accomplished toward the emancipation of thought in the church by the bold utterances of such biblical scholars as Kuenen, Wellhausen, Robertson Smith, Professors Sanday, Driver, Chayne and Saml. Davidson, and by the authors of *Lux Mundi*, who were forced to admit that all accounts, in the Hebrew scriptures, of events before the time of Abraham are unhistorical.

In *Popular Science Monthly* for Oct., 1895, Dr. White shows, by the researches of such eminent Biblical scholars as Layard, Botton, Sayce, Oppert and George Smith, that "it is revealed

beyond the possibility of doubt, that the accounts of creation, the tree of life in Eden, the institution of the Sabbath, the deluge, the Tower of Babel and much else in the Pentateuch, were simply an evolution out of earlier myths, legends and chronicles."

While forty years ago great scholars were four to one in favor of, they are now two to one against, the claim that John wrote this (the fourth) gospel. Beliefs formerly thought fundamental to Christianity, are simply based on ancient myths. Vast masses of legend, marvel and dogmatic assertion, have been dissolving quietly away like icebergs drifted into the Gulf Stream. The first three gospels are neither independent of each other, nor in that sort of agreement which was formerly asserted. The fourth gospel is mainly due to some gifted representative of the "Alexandrian School." Dr. White has done immense service to the seekers after truth in tracing in his *New Chapters in the Warfare of Science*, the struggle which the liberal minded and honest churchmen have had in their efforts to give to Christianity the benefits of a reasonable, instead of an unbelievable theology.

A great victory for toleration and religious liberty has recently been won in Austria-Hungary, through the persistent efforts of Dr. Wekelie, the Hungarian prime minister, in securing a separation of Church and State in Hungary.

What is known as the Tubingen School of Theology has driven from Germany almost every phase of orthodox belief and is influencing other (nominally) Christian countries in a constantly increasing degree.

Rev. Moritz Schwalb, a Protestant clergyman of Berlin, is the author of a book called *Is Jesus the Redeemer?* in which he endeavors to show that Jesus was not the Saviour.

Goldwin Smith, D. C. L., LL. D., in *North American Review* for Aug., 1895, p. 230, says: "No one who reads and thinks freely can doubt that the cosmogonical and historical foundations of traditional belief have been sapped by science and criticism. When the crust shall fall in appears to be only a question of time.

“Ominous symptoms already appear. Almost all the churches have trouble with heterodoxy and are trying clergymen for heresy. Quite as significant seems the growing tendency of the pulpit to concern itself less with religious dogma and more with the estate of man in his present world.

“It is needless to say what voices of unbelief, outside the churches are heard and how high are the intellectual quarters from which they come.

“Faith in the dogmatic creed is waxing faint.”

Dr. Paul Carus says : “The churches, especially the American churches, are not as conservative and stationary as their dogmas pretend to be. Almost all our churches have, during the last two decades, grown immensely in depth and catholicity. There is a very strong tendency among them to get rid of sectarian narrowness and dogmatic crudities.”

“Religion is losing its hold upon the life and thought of the people.”—Rev. G. Monroe Royce, *Forum*, January, 1894.

Rev. Jesse S. Gilbert (in the *Michigan Advocate*) says : “The kingdom of heaven is no longer stormed with prayers, tears and strong cries, as though to be taken by very force. . . . The decay of the emotional is seen in all the after phases of Christian life. The ‘amen’ corner has fallen into ‘innocuous desuetude.’ The class room is well nigh deserted. Preaching is largely apologetic. . . . The subtle spirit of doubt, with which the very air seems charged, and which so largely permeates modern literature, has weakened the faith of many.”

“The religious world is weary of the husks of creed and dogma.”—(B. O. Flower.)

“Religion is vanishing from nearly every part of the world.”—(Dr. McGlynn.)

“There is a tendency towards unhampered search for truth, investigation of all creeds, the casting off of customs that rest on no better ground than tradition. The church feels this modern spirit and in consequence is asking whether a great deal that used to be thought religious may not have been merely superstitious.”—*N. Y. Press*, January 12, 1894.

“Faith should be scientific and rational, rather than scriptural.”—(Rev. Elbert G. Smith, of Andover.)

The congress of religions held in Chicago in 1893 contributed largely to efface sectarian lines and to cause a recognition of the brotherhood of the race.

Rev. A. H. Lewis, D. D., says: “It was indeed a sight never before witnessed, a hopeful sign of the growing love of man to man, to see representatives of all faiths sitting together, courteously and candidly listening to the story of each others’ beliefs. Day after day I listened to these preachers, new and strange; the Parsee telling how the great Zoroaster found the one God, whose emblem is the ever burning fire; the Hindu and his striving for the infinite; the Buddhist of gentleness and brotherly love; the Catholic, the Protestant, the Liberal; the unifying thread, the note that blended all into harmony, the common ground, where all stood and which drew heart to heart, was emphasized as never before in the history of the world.”

This spirit was further illustrated by Rev. George D. Boardman, D. D., LL. D., in quoting the following lines:

“I will not ask my neighbor of his creed,  
 Nor what he deems of doctrine old or new.  
 I ask not by what name—among the rest  
 That Christians go by—he is named or known;  
 Whether his faith has been ‘professed,’  
 Or whether proven by his deeds alone,  
 I find in him discipleship so true,  
 So full, that nothing further I demand;  
 He may be bondman, freeman, gentile, Jew,  
 But we are brothers—walk we hand in hand.”

As evidence of greater tolerance now than formerly, is the fact that Mozoomdar, the Brahmin priest, participated in the services held in “All Soul:” (a Christian) church.

Principal Grant (Presbyterian) of Kingston, Ontario, says: “The people are beginning to care less and less for controversial divinity. Science is marching on irresistibly; there is no sectarianism in science. There can be none, because reason is one.”



Rev. Dr. Burwash, President of Victoria College, says : "Has it come to this—that our creeds are more precious than truth ; that we must shut our eyes, lest the blazing light of the nineteenth century should reveal some imperfection in the form, or even in the matter of our historic creeds?"

Even so radically orthodox a preacher as Rev. Francis L. Patton, D. D., President of Princeton University, says that all religions proceed from the same hypothesis and that all teach the same morality, adding, "There is no difference between Christianity and other religions—it is but a difference of degree."

Rev. O. Frothingham says : "Every form of religion must give way to the religion which consults human weal."

Rev. Dr. Lyman Abbott says : "All scientific men now accept—or assume as true—the doctrine of evolution, which has given us a new philosophy, a new biology, a new sociology, a new astronomy, a new geology. It will not finish its work until it has given us a new theology."

Rev. John W. Chadwick says : "There has not been a time, for fifteen hundred years, when so much of the sphere of religious opinion—which ages past have revered—has fallen into desuetude and disrespect as our own.

"I have not the least idea that our popular Christianity is going to be the religion of the future."

Rev. Dr. Gulliver, of Phillip's Academy, says : "Every science, every philosophy, every theology, is to enter the twentieth century regenerated and reconstructed."

Rev. R. Heber Newton says : "There will be greater changes in the world before the end of our century than there have been at any other time since the advent of Christ."

Rev. Frank E. Mason, of Brooklyn, says : "That the doctrines of Christianity are irrational, untenable and enervating is only too apparent to those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. . . . Robert Ingersoll is an iconoclast, second to none the world has ever produced, and the spirit which animates his words will breathe into the nostrils of man the breath

of a higher life, which can but result in the uplifting of the race. He is a heretic—the champion heretic of the age—and to his credit do we thus denominate him, for without heretics the world would become fossilized. Mr. Ingersoll belongs to this age. He is a production of the nineteenth century and could no more help coming than could the telephone or phonograph, which are both the property of current thought. . . . He is the animating embodiment of the enfranchising thought, which lifts man from a serf, to a sovereign of the universe. . . . The growing liberality of ages has in the nineteenth century become strong enough to centralize itself in man, and in Robert Ingersoll we see the type of man as he will be when enfranchised from the thralldom of religious superstition and creedal speculation. . . . As heterodox and radical as is Mr. Ingersoll to this age, it will not be long before his teachings will be orthodoxical.”

The scenes which have been portrayed above and the opinions which have been here expressed, bring to mind the words of Thomas Moore :

“Shall I ask the brave soldier, who stood by my side  
 In the cause of mankind, if our creeds disagree?  
 Shall I give up the friend I have valued and tried  
 If he kneel not before the same altar with me?  
 From the heretic girl of my soul shall I fly,  
 And seek somewhere else a more orthodox kiss?  
 Perish the heart and the law that would try  
 Truth, valor and love by a standard like this!”

The foregoing quotations are a few of many others which could be cited as indicating the determination which exists (even among those who still cling to the *forms* of the religion in which they were educated) to throw off the fetters with which impossible dogmas still seek to bind them, and to listen to the voice of reason, the lessons of truth, the demonstrations of science.

A revolt against orthodox Christianity, such as never before in the history of the church has been observable, is now clearly

apparent. It is manifesting itself in every branch of the Christian church. The theory of evolution has found advocates in Professors Drummond, Woodrow and Winchell, Reverend Drs. W. H. H. Ward, Abbott, McCosh and very many other professors of orthodox Christianity.

Union, Lane, Andover, Auburn and other theological seminaries bid defiance to the general assembly of the Presbyterian church, which has undertaken to "boycott" the graduates of those seminaries.

Rev. Dr. J. H. Ecoib, in the *New World*, has the courage, the honesty and the good sense to plead for a theological university that shall be *free from denominational control*.

The Revised Edition of the New Testament (1881) is likewise a valuable contribution to the liberalizing of Christian thought, the Revisers having discovered that (among many other pious frauds) the word God in 1 Timothy III. 16, was an interpolation; that the verse (1 John v. 7) "There are three that bear record . . ." is spurious; that in Luke II. 33, the words "His father" had been fraudulently substituted for "Joseph;" and that the language in Mark XVI. 9-20 was fabricated. The ministry of the Anglican church, of the Episcopal and Baptist churches of this country, have shown great independence of their creeds and (though to a lesser extent) have also the Methodist and other churches which are classed among the orthodox; while the Unitarian and Universalist churches have exhibited marked advances, within a generation, toward rationalism.

Colonel Ingersoll was recently a guest at the Unitarian Club of New York City and his frank expressions of opinion were there greeted with the most hearty applause.

Rev. Minot J. Savage, of Boston, dispenses, in his pulpit, with (futile) prayer.

Even the Roman Catholic Church is progressing toward unconstrained thought, as may be noticed by the utterances of Professor St. George Mivart in England, of Professors Serrouant and Loisy in France, of Canons Bartolo and Berta in

Italy, and of Fathers McGlynn, Burtzell and Ducey in this country.

The great influence of the latter on the Papacy has elicited the remark that "where Father Ducey leads, Rome follows." All these, to a greater or lesser degree, accept the developments of science, regard the conclusions of modern biblical criticism as well founded and show a commendable independence of the Church of Rome.

True, there is an hallucination and hysteria attending revivals of religion, camp meetings, "Christian Endeavor" gatherings, and the "inane vaporings" of such "Evangelists" as Dwight L. Moody, Rev. Samuel Jones, Rev. Samuel Small, Rev. Joseph Cook, Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage,—the thirteen-year-old-boy pulpiteer of Missouri and the nine-year-old colored Baptist girl-preacher of South Carolina (all of whom attract large audiences), which have taken possession of the minds of unreasoning enthusiasts and deluded zealots, something like the (supposed) demoniacal possessions of the days of Christ. True, also, that the new "Messiah" of New Mexico is now attracting his thousands of equally deluded followers. It is also true, as recently stated in the *Minneapolis Times*, that intense religious excitement has produced an "emotional insanity," which has resulted in very many persons voluntarily begging themselves and their families by giving all they had to their church. But the sober sense of thinking people, the increasing desire to investigate, to recognize no light but that of reason, to dig down to the solid rock of truth and to accept no other foundation as a basis for belief, is threatening ecclesiasticism with utter destruction.

The "Salvation Army" with its display of banners and the noise of its music may appeal to the emotional of our nature, or perhaps frighten "sinners" to join its ranks, somewhat as the Chinese of former days sought to "frighten" their enemies with the sound of cymbal and of gong; but the mighty agency of thought will surely triumph over the hosts of irrational, illogical, unreasoning foes to mental activity and mental progress.

The "signs of the times" all point to the ushering in of that grand day when an arrogant priesthood, a dogmatic ministry, a meaningless ritual, an unintelligible creed, an unenlightened faith, a reasonless belief, an obscene and untruthful Bible, and all of their accompanying errors, superstitions and follies, will be relegated to the ignorant past, and when the goal of existence will be the attainment of truth.

"Let truth and falsehood grapple; who ever knew truth put to the worst in *free and open* encounter?"—(Milton.)

"The most indispensable requisite, in regard to religion, is that it should be true."—(*Supernatural Religion.*)

"Search for the truth is the noblest work of man, its publication a duty."—(Madame de Staël.)

"There's naught in age, there's naught in youth  
That's worth the gem which men call truth."

The irrepressible conflict between slavery and freedom in this country was fought with determination on both sides, but with disaster and overwhelming defeat to that relic of a barbarous age—physical slavery, and so there is to-day an irrepressible conflict between mental slavery and freedom of thought. So long as we can count upon progress, upon increasing intelligence, upon the reign of reason, we may be certain of a disastrous and overwhelming defeat of the forces of ignorance and superstition which are arrayed in support of an *equally* barbarous relic of past ages—the slavery of the mind.

Now that the main obstacle to the triumph of free thought—the Christian Church—is being largely deserted by those who believe that deed is better than creed, that truth is better than error, that knowledge is better than ignorance, that honest utterance is better than cringing subservience, that perceptive thought is better than blind faith, that the marvels of nature are grander than the miracles of superstition, that truth is authority and not that authority is truth, that religion is not a dogma, but a life, we may look with confident hope for the spread of a new and rational religion, destined before long to

become universal—the religion of ethics, of brotherhood and of altruism.

“Dark night of faith, farewell forever,  
Thy galling chains I now dis sever ;  
In freedom’s sun I’ll bask ;  
Oh, what a glorious task !

“In truth’s fair realm, I’ll rear my home  
Beneath the shade of reason’s dome ;  
Philosophy ! ’tis thine to tell  
Of every creed and dogma’s knell.”

## PRAYER.

“I would prevail, if prayers might prevail.”—*1 Henry vi.*

THE most useless and inconsistent and illogical occupation that one can engage in is that of prayer. There is not a single reliable record of an answer to prayer in the history of all the ages. For centuries the ignorant faith of those wedded to religious beliefs has found voice in orisons, which, had there been a listening, compassionate Divinity, would have vibrated on the ear of such Deity, with presumably welcome results. But no answer has ever come from that great storehouse of (supposed) beneficence, sympathy and pity. The God of such zealots is as deaf to all the prayers of his petitioners as are the gods of brass and stone and wood of (what are called) the “heathen.”

A single verse (by Charles Stephenson) will illustrate how God answers prayer :

“ ‘O God, have mercy,’ a mother cried,  
As she humbly knelt at the cradle side ;  
‘O God, have mercy and hear my prayer  
And take my babe in thy tender care ;  
The angel of death is in the room  
And is calling aloud for my babe to come ;  
Thou, thou alone, hast power to save ;  
O God, have mercy—’tis all I crave.’

. . . . .  
A tiny grave, ’neath a willow’s shade,  
Telleth the answer the *Merciful* made.”

Professor Felix Adler says : “To those who bear within them the awe-struck sense of the sublimity and mystery that

envelops the Infinite Cause of causes—Life of life—prayer is an impossibility. . . .

“The moment the Infinite ceases to be invested with human personality, though its existence, its height and power and glory, be never so real and certain to you, from that moment you can no longer use the form of prayer. . . . Hence we see why so many persons of the present day have ceased to pray. . . . There is no arm stretched out from above to intervene in our behalf.”

Colonel Ingersoll asks the question : “Has any blow been saved ; has any storm been stopped ; has any pestilence been stayed—because of prayer ?”

‘They have stormed the stars with their passion cry  
For hope or mercy or justice here ;  
Plead that their darlings should never die,  
Plead with many a sob and tear.

“Folly ! for never an answer came,  
And never an arrow was turned away :  
It sped to its beautiful mark the same  
Whether they prayed or scorned to pray.”

(*Kenneth Lamar.*)

Even Luther has said that “we see by experience that God does not take care of the temporal life.”

Rev. R. Heber Newton thus ridicules the unreasonableness, the inconsistency, of prayer : “If prayer were always answered, its power could then be calculated as is the power of steam or electricity. It would be measurable, ponderable, merchantable force. Prayer would be an order upon Omnipotence, a draft to be duly honored when presented, a faucet opening the conduits of force, a wire tapping the battery of the Infinite energy. . . . Man has only to wire his orders to heaven and supplies are shipped at once.”

Rev. D. Dallinger refused to obey an order of the Archbishop of York, England, for prayer to stay the ravages of smallpox, saying that it would be “mockery,” and adding : “As smallpox came among us by physical law broken, so will it depart by physical law obeyed.”



Winwood Reade says : " It is as foolish to pray for rain as it would be to pray that the sun should set in the middle of the day."

Professor Noah K. Davis, of the University of Virginia, says : " To ask in prayer for any change in the order of nature is to ask for a violation of the law of nature."

Leslie Stephens says : " We still pray for a fine harvest, but we really consult the barometer, and believe more in the prophecies of meteorologists than in an answer to our prayers."

Father McGuire's advice to those contemplating praying for rain, was, " Wait till the wind changes !"

"The bended knee and lifted hands  
Implore the gods in vain ;  
Not all the priests of all the lands  
E'er brought—or stayed—the rain."

Rev. John W. Chadwick says : " So long as men believed in special providences, there was a premium on poor sanitary and social regulations : why dig a drain to hinder typhus, when a prayer will keep it off? Why spend money for fire-engines, if fire can be checked by repeating the litany and penitential prayers (as was claimed by a Boston rector?) Why seek to stay the plague of grasshoppers by rational device, when a fast day will procure Almighty interference? . . . Prayer, considered as a petition for miraculous interference, is irrational, be the petition for a material or spiritual advantage."

Renan says : " Men, nowadays, pray less and less, for they know that no prayer was ever effective."

George Jacob Holyoke says : " He who thinks the world can be put right by prayer, is a fool if he engages in personal effort to do it."

In Tuttle's *Ethics of Science* (p. 270) it says : " The utterance of prayer is like the dog baying the moon."

A writer in the *Twentieth Century* says : " If I can influence the Deity of the popular imagination by prayer, I am master of the Universe, and God is my subaltern—doing my bidding."

If there be a personal God (as is claimed by orthodox Christianity,) and if He be a merciful being, holding the relationship to the people of the world which the father of a family holds to his children; and if He be a loving Father (all of which is also claimed by Christians,) is it possible that He can be apathetic, or insensible to, or unaffected by the pains and sorrows and anguish, the sufferings, the trials, the woes, to which frail human nature is heir? Can He be indifferent to the wails of the widow, the helplessness of the orphan, the grief of him, or her, who has parted with wife, or husband, or child? Has He no inclination to stay the havoc of war, to arrest the bullet ere it has sped its way to the quivering flesh of some doting father, or loving husband, or dutiful son? Is he unmoved at the shrieks of the wounded, the moans of the dying, who have become victims of some railroad catastrophe? Hundreds of thousands of shipwrecked mariners and passengers have struggled against the merciless waves—with hope in their hearts and prayer on their lips—clinging to their loved ones, until, under a sense of helplessness and despondency and despair, they sank beneath the cruel waters, to rise no more: while the Christian God was utterly heedless to their cries of anguish. Hundreds of thousands of those whom lightning and tornado and earthquake have visited—many on bended knee, in supplication that the impending calamity be stayed—have indulged in hope of rescue by an all-powerful and ever-loving Being, who proved deaf to all entreaty.

Pestilence and famine have ravaged and desolated all countries, in all ages, decimating populations, and presenting a sickening picture of want and wretchedness; and yet the Omnipresent has, apparently, known nothing of the inflictions of these gaunt messengers of horror and ghastliness.

Prayers have, for centuries, ascended to a supposed justice-loving, humane Omniscient; that the iniquity of slavery, the debasement of woman, the wrongs of tyranny, the evil of intemperance, the perniciousness of superstition, may be redressed; but all such prayers have been as useless as if addressed to the wrong-doers themselves.

Prayers, on each side of hostile forces, to the same "God of battles," show the absurdity of such prayers. France was Catholic and Germany Protestant, but both prayed to the same God. He then heard the prayer of the Protestants. At the massacre of St. Bartholomew, it was the fiend-like voice of the adherents of Charles IX to which He gave a willing ear. Sometimes He seemed to have favored the followers of Catholic Mary and again of Protestant Elizabeth. The prolongation of the "Thirty Years' War," with its accompanying horrors, seemed to demonstrate the difficulty which the "Ruler of Nations" had in determining to which of the contestants He would award ultimate success. And seven long years of carnage and privation seemed requisite for Him to decide as to whether the United States of America should be the slave of Great Britain or a free and independent nation.

In our four years of conflict with the slave oligarchy, God seems to have had a preference for slavery, and then apparently changing his mind in favor of freedom, gave final victory to the North. Such we must conclude to have been the vacillating course of Deity, if indeed there be a Deity.

Christianity demands that we submit to the "powers that be." Also that we should pray for our rulers, but never for freedom from rule.

Lord Sherbrooke asks—"Where has a nation been freed by submission and prayer?"

Greg. in his *Creeds of Christendom*, says: "Prayer to be a *bona fide*, effective agent, in obtaining any boon, must operate on an impressible and mutable will."

Henry Wood, in the *Arena* for January, 1892, says: "In view of the immutability of Law, what is the promise of prayer? Is not any petition, that would strive to change the divine order, superfluous?"

In Volney's *Ruins* (p. 85) we read: "Christians have said that God is without variableness, and still they pray to Him to change."

Colonel Ingersoll says: "If God is immutable, then all the

prayers of all people, in all ages, have been in vain ; if He is vacillating, then the attribute of Omniscience must be taken from Him."

To quote Professor Oswald : " Superstition says pray and you shall receive. Science says sow and you shall reap."

To quote Colonel Ingersoll again : " Prayer and miracle are twin sisters of superstition. . . . *Fear* falls upon the earth and *prays*—*courage* stands erect and thinks."

Colonel Ingersoll also (conclusively) shows the utter absurdity of prayer by stating that " chaplains often pray for such impossibilities as that wisdom may be given to Congress !"

The futility of prayer must be admitted (without hesitation or question) by those religionists who are believers in the doctrine of predestination. This doctrine and its results, so far as relates to prayer, are clearly set forth by an article in the *Presbyterian* of Nashville, Tenn., viz. : " The doctrine that God, from all eternity, foreordained what comes to pass and thus shut Himself up to one way of doing things, limiting His present sovereignty by His eternal decree, seems rather a *discouragement than an incentive to prayer*. If things were unchangeably fixed a cycle of millions of years before we were born, they are *past praying for*."

Christians pray to Jesus, and yet the prayer of Jesus himself (when on earth) was unheeded. He prayed that the cup of bitterness, which his enemies held to his lips, might pass from him ; but even his prayer availed not.

In the August number for 1894 of the *Freethought Magazine*, a correspondent gives an account of a supposed conversation between Rev. Moses Collect and Mr. Fullmind, in the village of Harmony, where Mr. F—— after paraphrasing one of the Christian doxologies, so as to conform to the evolution theory, thus : " Praise *bud*, from whom all *blossoms* flow,"—said that " prayer was the act of teasing a suppositious being for a hypothetical and unmerited advantage over one's fellows ;" and which definition of prayer was so true to fact that it met with the cordial approval of " Dominie Collect."

In the *Freethought Magazine* for Sep. '94, is an article by Eliza Mowry Bliven, in which she shows how *prayer retards progress*, by the reliance which religious people place on prayer; such retarding of progress being in exact proportion to the faith in, and reliance upon, prayer, which the person who prays possesses. Surely, if people believe that some superior power would accomplish for them what they desired, there would be an absence of stimulus to exertion on their part; therefore belief in the efficacy of prayer tends to restrain efforts to prosecute undertakings, which all thoughtful, practical persons *know* must be carried on without the slightest aid from any superior or supernatural power. If those who pray "Give us this day our daily bread," *really believe* in actual answers to such prayers, the millions of Christian toilers in the world would sit quietly and complacently by, trusting, with the most abiding confidence, in the assurance of Christ himself that they need take "no thought for their lives, what they shall eat or what they shall drink, nor for their bodies, what they shall put on." The fact that all who pray for daily sustenance are constantly engaged in some bread-winning work, *proves* their insincerity—their hypocrisy.

Professor Draper has drawn a contrast between the Christians and the Moors, of the middle ages, showing the cleanliness, order, learning and refinement of the latter and the reverse of these accomplishments or practices, owing to superstition, bigotry, ignorance and cruelty, of the former, and adds: "When smitten with disease, the Christian peasant resorts to a shrine; the Moorish one to an instructed physician."

Many persons believe, as did Archdeacon Paley, that it is not expected that prayers will be answered, but that they are simply acknowledgments of dependence upon a Superior being, or are regarded as one of the methods of worship, or as a form of church service, or, perhaps, as acts supposed to be pleasing to God and uttered for His glory and in His praise; and yet a selfish hope for personal benefit is at the bottom of every prayer. Thomas Paine, writing to Samuel Adams, in 1803,

says: "A man does not serve God by praying, for it is *himself* he is trying to serve, and as to hiring praying men to pray, as if the Deity needed instruction, it is in my opinion an abomination. . . . You, my friend, will find, even in your last moments, more consolation in the silence of resignation than in the murmuring wish of a prayer."

Prayer is offered to sanction injustice, robbery and even murder. It is a well-known practice of the Italian brigand to pray to the Virgin Mary as he is about to drive his stiletto to the heart of the wayfarer.

In Yorkshire, England, in October, 1893, the strikers organized a prayer meeting, which was well attended, and the most fervent prayers were uttered for the success of their work of destruction and murder.

A negro was lynched at Frederick, Md., on November 17, 1895. Immediately preceding which some officers of the Salvation Army, who formed part of the lynching mob, solemnized the occasion, and gave a religious sanction to the act about to be performed, by reciting the "Lord's Prayer!"

It is not the purpose of this article to make more than a passing allusion to the enormity of the practice of taxing those who regard prayers as utterly useless and absurd, for the purpose of placing chaplains in Congress, in our legislatures, in our army, navy, prisons, etc.; but the wrong and the absurdity of such practice must be patent to every just and to every thinking being. There is not one out of ten, or perhaps one out of fifty who ever gives the slightest attention to the prayers of chaplains. The custom has become a mockery and is treated generally with ridicule. *The Star* (newspaper) of Washington recently said that "as a rule the prayer of the Senate Chaplain is daily delivered to an almost empty chamber. . . . The ignoring of the prayer has grown to be a habit of the Senate."

It is related of Judge Davis of Illinois—when President *pro tempore* of the Senate—that he entered the Chamber one day with the Chaplain, and the only senator present was Mr. Butler of South Carolina. Judge Davis, with all the solemnity and

gravity usually observed by him, gave a stroke with his gavel and said: "The senator from South Carolina will come to order."

At the peace Congress held in London in 1890, the Chairman, Sir Hugh de Burgh Lawson, declared that he was opposed to opening this session of the Congress with prayer, as it was inconsistent with the practice that obtained in his country of placing the eldest son in the army, "where he is taught to run his enemies through."

The *new* and *unsuperstitious* "Pilgrim's Progress," a progression from the "slough of (superstitious) despond" to the solid rock of rational hope and independent thought, entitled *Travels in Faith*, by Capt. Robert C. Adams, of Montreal (son of the late Rev. Dr. Nehemiah Adams of Boston), is a most interesting work, and from its article on "Prayer" I take pleasure in quoting: "The shaking of the Joss-sticks in China, the whirling of the prayer-wheel in Burmah, the seven daily prostrations of the Mussulman, the counting of beads in Rome, and the prayer-meetings of Protestants, are alike, in their measure of success or failure. . . . If the Supreme Power in the universe acts only through natural laws, prayer is irrational and useless, unless it can be proved that prayer is a natural force. . . . The sailor who prays for a fair wind really asks that other sailors may have a head wind; and supposing that sailors pray, God is daily besought that the wind may blow from every point of the compass. . . . Prayer is not only usually futile, but often injurious. It concentrates the mind upon itself and promotes selfishness. . . . Prayer has been the resort of laziness and has often paralyzed effort."

Captain Adams quotes from Dr. Hammond to prove the effect the imagination has in producing cures, and instances a case of cure by the Croton Water, used in New York City, poured from a bottle labeled *Lourdes Water*, the patient, in unbounded faith, thinking it was what the label indicated it to be.

That the effect of the imagination also shows itself in seeming answer to prayer cannot be disputed. There are too many instances thereof to occasion serious doubt. The mind of the true believer in prayer, and in answers thereto, is so thoroughly imbued with faith, in the belief that "God is the hearer and answerer of prayer," we must admit, as a psychological fact, that prayers are (at least apparently) answered.

Such (apparent) answers are, undoubtedly, simply and solely the operation of will, intensified by the "zeal of credulity." But no tranquil or thoughtful or logical mind can give credence to any claim that nature answers prayer or that there is a personality, somewhere in the universe, who has the faculty of so changing the invariable laws of nature as to violence to those laws at the behest of any enthusiastic visionary.

As Clifford Howard says : "Prayers are productive of beneficial results, through purely natural causes. . . . While the efficiency of prayer is undoubted, its effects are not due to the supposed interposition of a supernatural power, but to the well known influence of the imagination over physical conditions."

Professor Henry Drummond, of Glasgow, says : "We have been accustomed to look for spiritual gifts (joy and peace and rest and faith and love) to come in answer to prayer. *They don't come in that way.* . . . I have met people who have been praying all their lives for these things and have not got them. The usual methods of sanctification are all futile."

In 1872, Sir Henry Thompson wrote to Professor John Tyndall, suggesting a plan by which the "absolute calculable value of prayer" could (almost certainly) be ascertained. "A careful clinical observation" (for instance) to estimate the extent or degree in which prayer is effective, would, it was thought, be a proper test, and so it was proposed that inmates of the wards of a selected hospital should, during a period of not less than three years, be made the object of special prayer



by the *whole body of the faithful*, and the result be compared with that of an equal number of years when no such "special" effort had been made and when but a few comparatively of the faithful had prayed.

Sir Henry argued that if prayer was effective, it would be proved by the result of such a concentration of prayer—such an avalanche of application—in comparison with those years when prayers were limited to a very much smaller number of persons. He urged the trial on the ground that "no more interesting subject of enquiry can exist for the honest believer than the extent of man's influence with heaven."

Professor Tyndall, in endorsing the propriety of Sir Henry Thompson's proposed test, calls to mind the matter in dispute between Newton and Arago—the former claiming that light traveled faster in water than in air, the latter that the reverse was true. The question was submitted to a "test" and was conclusive against Newton.

Professor Tyndall sees no good reason why a test of a question which has a vast number of persistent and intelligent adherents on both sides, as to the efficacy of prayer, should not likewise be submitted by both disputants. He does not contend for the extinction or displacement of prayer, but that, in his opinion, "physical nature is not its legitimate domain," and that "no good can come of giving it a delusive value by claiming for it a power in physical nature."

And for this honest effort of endeavoring to determine, in a practical manner, one of the most important questions of the day, Professor Tyndall has been accused of "insolence, outrage, profanity and blasphemy," by those who reject every scientific thought which conflicts with the superstitions of theology.

The *Nation* tells us that Professor Tyndall was substantially anticipated in his "prayer-test" by the natives of Hawaii, who, years before, had "challenged the missionaries to a competitive test of the value of prayer and a heathen sacrifice, as a means of stopping the dangerous flow of lava from Manna Loa." It is understood that the Christians had not as much confidence

in the success of their prayer as the Sandwich Islanders had in their sacrifices, and so the missionaries declined to apply the test.

On last "Thanksgiving day" what might be considered a true "test" of the efficacy of prayer was made, when the "Christian Endeavors" from all parts of the country convened at Cleveland, Ohio, and in a united and earnest and solemn and protracted effort, engaged in prayer for the conversion of Colonel Ingersoll. Ought not such an aggregation of sincere, praying Christians to have prevailed, if the tripartient, but unitive, Deity, to whom they prayed, sympathized with them in the object of their prayers and if, also, there were indeed any "Father, Son and Holy Ghost" to listen to them, or to any other prayers?

If any thing so inconceivable, as such conversion, had taken place what an impulse would Christianity have acquired, what rejoicings, what anthems of praise, what hallelujahs of triumph would have sounded long and loud throughout the length and breath of Christendom!

Just imagine, if you can, this giant intellect, this matchless genius, the sublimity of whose mental visions is unexcelled; whose imagery (as was said of the eloquent Kossuth) is like "the tracery upon a Damascus blade," whose cogent logic, stirring utterances, touching pathos, laughter-moving wit, whose devotion to freedom, love for his brother man, sympathy for the oppressed and needy, whose championship of right, of justice, of unrestrained thought, whose generosity, geniality, broad-mindedness, large heartedness, have won for him the admiration, the esteem, the gratitude and the love of his fellows—imagine *such* a captive in the hands of the enemies of mental liberty!

Shades of departed martyrs to Christian bigotry, persecution and cruelty! fear not the *impossible*.

Prayers by such narrow-minded, shriveled-hearted, religious zealots are futile, senseless and *insulting*.

Ingersoll is too good a man and too ideal a character to become the target of such insolence.

Shakespeare's was the supreme genius of the seventeenth century, Voltaire's the master mind of the eighteenth century, and Ingersoll's is the most brilliant intellect of the nineteenth century. All three, disbelievers in the dogmatic theology of their respective times. Toward such conspicuous and majestic figures in the realm of thought, have the arrows of religious fanaticism and degrading superstition, steeped in the gall and venom of ignorance and bigotry for the last three centuries, been directed.

In 1880 another thorough test of the efficacy of prayer was had when prayers ascended for weeks from millions of American Christians, for the life of President Garfield, but all likewise, in vain.

In Francis Galton's *Inquiries into Human Faculties*, a chapter entitled "Objective Efficacy of Prayer," is devoted to a presentation of results obtained by—a comparison between—those who use prayer as a means for the attainment of certain ends and those who do not make such use of prayer. He shows that the agency of prayer is not recognized by the medical faculty. He also states that far more numerous prayers are offered for the long lives of sovereigns than for others, and yet that sovereigns are, on the average, the shortest lived of all. Comparing the lives of clergymen, lawyers and physicians, he shows that the former (though it is their profession to pray, and for whom more prayers are offered than for the other classes), are the shortest lived of the three professions. The Liturgy of the English church provides prayers for the nobility, that they may be "endued with *wisdom, understanding,*" etc.; prayers, also, are especially offered for the *religious*, that their *reason* may be preserved. And yet, this author states that both these classes are peculiarly subject to *insanity*. The author is also unaware of any occasion where any writer on meteorological science had discovered that the weather has been modified by prayer. He also remarks on the fact that missionaries and others engaged in pious enterprises have no immunity from danger, which is appreciated by life insurance companies. Further, he questions if commercial undertakings, which have

been inaugurated with prayer have been any more successful than those undertakings which have dispensed with prayer opening ; and shows what disastrous results attended at least one business enterprise, viz., the Royal British Bank, the proceedings of which were opened with prayer.

President Cleveland, following the improper and unauthorized examples of his predecessors of more recent years, issued a proclamation "appointing and setting apart" the 28th of November last as a day of thanksgiving and prayer.

By what authority did he do this? Does he find warrant therefor in the Constitution of the United States, or in the laws of Congress? If not, what business has he to usurp such authority?

The *American Sentinel* says: "Who has appointed the President of the United States, the high priest of the nation—the *Pontifex Maximus* of the American stomach?"

These Thanksgiving day proclamations show to what extent we have departed from the secular idea of our government, as established by its founders. As an illustration, President Jefferson refused to appoint any days of thanksgiving and prayer during his administration, and on being petitioned, in 1808, to proclaim a day of prayer and fasting, denied such petition, using this language: "I consider the government of the United States as interdicted by the Constitution from intermeddling with religious institutions, doctrines, discipline or exercises."

Presidents Washington and Madison held similar views.

The language of President Cleveland's proclamation is: "I hereby appoint and set apart . . . as a day of thanksgiving and prayer to be kept by *all* our people;" and he calls upon *all* to "humbly beseech the Lord," etc.

What sublime impertinence!

Probably not more than one-tenth of the people of the United States believe in prayer, and yet he has the assurance to ask all the people to *humbly beseech the Lord!*

The *New York Tribune* of Sept. 18, 1892, says: "A clergy-

man spoke of prayer as touching the electric button which rings in heaven."

The Rev. Mr. Moody, who was a passenger on the steamer *Spre* in December, 1892, which came near foundering at sea, must have had an (electric) apparatus of that kind, for he had the assurance to claim that the vessel, cargo, passengers and crew were all saved by *his* interposition, through prayer! To the credit of many others of the clergy, they protested against the vanity of this man in assuming that his intimacy and influence with the "supreme intelligence" was such that, had it not been for his individual supplication, all would have been lost.

Have any of our fashionable people any intelligent conception of the uses of prayer or have they ever studied its effects? They utter their prayers or read their prayer-books by rote and without the slightest exercise of the faculty of the understanding. Most of them indulge in prayer as a pastime, or as they would any other of the fashionable practices or pleasures of life.

"She went from opera, park, assembly, play,  
To morning walks ; and prayers three hours a day."

Miss Susan H. Wixon, of Fall River, recently delivered an admirable address on the subject: "Will the coming woman go to church?" Her conclusions were that the "coming woman" would not go to church, because (when the coming woman came) there would be no church to go to, that is, to any church where they read the Bible indiscriminately, sing praises to the "unknown quantity" called *the Trinity*, or pray to an impossible Deity. So we may assume that the coming woman will not pray and for a similar reason, viz., that there will be no church to go to, where prayers are a requisite. We may likewise ask the question: Will the coming *man* pray? Assuredly not, if the coming *woman* don't pray. Intelligent, reflecting beings have been

"Taught by millenniums of barren prayer"

its utter uselessness.

Rev. Minot J. Savage asks : " Will they pray in the church of the future ? " and adds : " The only thing in the prayer of the past that any new theory of the universe threatens to outgrow and leave behind is that which all noble men and women ought to be glad to be rid of. We have outgrown that conception of prayer which supposes that we, petty, ignorant, petulant, changing children, have power to interfere with the magnificent mechanism of the universe. "

Let us learn wisdom from the heathen (so-called) and subscribe to the sentiment of the Japanese (shinto) poet, Michizane :

" Only if our inner heart is in harmony with the true way  
The gods will protect us, even though we do not pray. "

## IN PLACE OF CHRISTIANITY.

“And in its place  
A mightier church shall come whose covenant word  
Shall be the deeds of love.”

“There will be a new church, founded on moral science.”

*Emerson.*

“Religion is dying, but humanity is taking its place.”

*Elizur Wright.*

“Theology is passing away and virtue is taking its place.”

*M. M. Mangasarian.*

THE ever recurring question, “What is religion?” is suggested in considering the subject before us. Religion may be defined as a system of belief in the supernatural. That, at least, is the commonly accepted signification of the term. And what is Christianity? There are various phases and classifications of the term, but it is generally conceded that by Christianity is meant, not the simple, gentle, kindly, fraternal, compassionate, sympathetic, tolerant, humane, loving religion of Christ, but a collection of doctrines enunciated by those who lived more than a century after Christ; such doctrines having been remodeled from time to time by the “fathers of the church” and reconstructed by its various councils.

This preface seems requisite in an analysis of the constantly repeated question which Christians ask of those who have become emancipated from the thralldom of the church. “What are you going to give us in place of the religion of Christianity?” A question which implies that the answer should be that something better, or at least as good, should be put in its place.

Let us see what answers are the most appropriate, the most correct, the most consistent with the welfare and happiness of the human family.

When the question was asked of Voltaire, he answered : " If a surgeon is about to remove a cancer from the breast of some suffering being, do you ask what he will put in its place ? "

When Colonel Ingersoll was asked this question, he answered : " If a counterfeit bill is presented at a bank and payment refused, is it asked what is to be given in its place, to the holder of the counterfeit ? "

There is significance in both these answers, as they infer that Christianity, in the one case, is a cancer on the " body politic," and, in the other, a false representation, or counterfeit, of true religion. And does not a contemplation and study of Christianity, its teachings and requirements sustain these inferences ?

In a book of recent date by the late Dr. Edwin Hatch of Oxford University is indicated with fidelity every step of the process by which " Christianity, from being a religion of life in its great founder's faith, and of hope and love, became, in the course of three centuries, a religion of belief, consigning to eternal hell all who were not prepared to give unquestioning assent to theological propositions which no mortal man could understand. "

Rev. John W. Chadwick, of Brooklyn, says : " The Christianity of Jesus was divinely simple, in comparison with the stupendous system of ritual and dogma which has been foisted upon it, so burying it out of sight that many thousands have not known that such a thing once gladdened simple hearts. It was an easy system in comparison with that which finally corrupted it so grossly that there was left hardly a semblance of its original self. " Continuing, Rev. Mr. Chadwick speaks of the religion of Jesus and its simple requirements, viz., " to do justly and love mercy, " and adds : " Nothing (required) about any forms and ceremonies, nothing about baptism or the eucharist, nothing about penances or fasts, nothing about the Apostles' or the Nicene or the Athanasian creed, nothing



about the confession of Augsburg or the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England or the thirty-three articles of the Westminster confession, nothing about the Trinity or the atonement, or total depravity or election or any of those things which have assumed so much importance in the history of the Christian Church.”

Rev. S. D. McConnell, D. D., of Philadelphia, said there was “not a single ‘confession of faith’ that was believed in, in its entirety, by even the most conservative members of the ministry of the church.”

Can we not, to advantage, put the simple religion of Christ in the place of the dogmatic, ceremonial religion of Christianity?

Is not the “pure and undefiled religion” announced by the Apostle James, viz., “to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction and to keep one’s self unspotted from the world,” a far better, more practical, and more reasonable religion and one that should properly take the place of a creed-bound Christianity?

No word of censure or criticism will be found, in this article, of *primitive* Christianity, but only of that monstrous system of theology, which *assumed* to be Christian and which for many centuries has been and is now taught from every orthodox pulpit.

There is, also, a marked distinction between what Christ actually said and did and what is *attributed* to him by the (pious) interpolators and forgers of the Bible; so that when speaking of Christianity, we do not mean the religion of Christ, but something as widely different from it as is the base from the pure metal.

The kindly, humane, altruistic teachings of Gautama, of Confucius and of Christ, may—perhaps—be called *religion*. But the Christianity which arose a century or more after the death of Christ, is more properly denominated *theology*.

In *Treasury of Thought*, by M. M. Ballou, we read:

“Religion is universal; theology is exclusive.

“Religion is humanitarian; theology is sectarian.

“Religion united mankind; theology divided it.

“Religion is love; theology preaches love and practices bigotry.

“Religion looks to the *moral* worth of man; theology to his creed.

“Religion is peace; theology is the apple of discord.”

The question really asked (though the orthodox Christian is so lamentably ignorant of what his religion teaches, that he is unwilling to admit it) is: What shall be put in the place of error, of the contradictions and indecencies in the Bible, of its pseudo-astronomy, geology and biology, of the untruthful stories of Eden, of Enoch, of Samson, of Jonah, of Job, of Daniel, of the standing still of the sun, of the feeding of Elijah by ravens and of his ride to heaven in a chariot of fire, of Elisha and the bears and the forty-two children, of the utterance of human speech by Balaam's beast of burden, of the confusion of tongues, of Solomon's temple, of the longevity of Methuselah, and of the many other preposterous records in the Old Testament, and of the miracles in the New Testament, the divinity, virgin birth, resurrection and ascension of Jesus? There is but one answer to all these questions, and that is, *Truth*; put *truth* in the place of all these unreasonable, unbelievable chronicles which are found in Christianity's untruthful and immoral textbook (the Holy [!] Bible). Why it is that virtuous men and modest women do not insist upon an expurgation of the obscene passages in the Bible, is incomprehensible. By way of contrast thereto, Rev. James Leggè, D. D., a missionary to China, says: “You might read all the Confucian books, from beginning to end, in the presence of the most refined lady, without needing to omit a word.” And so far as the untruthfulness of the Bible is concerned, if it is asked what is to be put in the place of such untruthfulness, it might with equal propriety be asked, What is to be put in place of Æsop's fables or of Munchausen's exaggerations?

Prof. Felix Adler says: “The world is determined to hold fast to the old belief, *not because it is believed to be true*, but because it thinks it best to do so, until it finds something to ‘take its place.’ The God-Christ will be rejected, but the man-

Jesus is to be the leader and the regenerative social movement of our own day."

Colonel Ingersoll says in answer to the question, "What are we to give in place of our religion?"—"For the vagaries of the clouds, the infidels propose to substitute the realities of earth; for superstitions, the splendid demonstrations and achievements of science; and for theological tyranny, the chainless liberty of thought."

Rev. J. W. Chadwick says: "No maxim has been more injurious than that which formulates the absurdity that we should destroy nothing till we had something as good to put in its place."

Rev. Charles Strong of Melbourne says: "We no more destroy the religion of Jesus by pulling an old theological house to pieces, than we destroy the stars by exploding old world theories about the earth being a plane and the stars rising above and setting below it."

Leslie Stephen says: "If you would wait to speak the truth until you can replace the old decaying formula by a completely elaborated system, you must wait forever. Reconstruct, it is said, before you destroy. But you must destroy *in order* to reconstruct. The old husk of dead faith is pushed off by the growth of living beliefs below."

In place of the crude Bible notion that "in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"—the sun and moon—and "made the stars also" (!)—with all the limitations which this puerile "account of creation" suggests—we recognize the infinite grandeur and boundless immensity of the universe, with its incalculably multitudinous orbs of light, the inconceivable illimitableness of space and the incomprehensible vastness of the eternity of time.

In place of worshiping an imperfect, capricious, inconsistent God, which is "revealed" to us in the Bible, is it not far more reasonable to worship the beauties, the perfections, the sublimities, the unvarying laws, and the wonder-inspiring order of nature?

Instead of belief in miracles, or in their possibility, let us

rather contemplate the far greater marvels of life, growth, decay and death, and the continuing process by which new life and growth are wrought by a natural and endless chain of cause and effect.

“ I venerate great Nature’s plan,  
And worship at her shrine ;  
While goodness, truth and love in man,  
I hold to be divine.”

Professor Adler says : “ Resurrection is a fact. On every hand we see Nature rising, and the glory of flowers and the song of birds, from the long (wintry) slumber into which she has been plunged.”

Instead of having veneration for a cruel, malevolent, relentless, unjust Being, which the Christian religion exacts of its votaries, let us rejoice that such a Being is unknowable, unthinkable, improbable, nay, *impossible* ; and that there is vastly greater reasonableness and consistency in bestowing our heart’s admiration and affection on our own educated and sympathetic humanity.

Religion, as usually interpreted, does not—primarily—seek to control the moral being. It does not urge—except perhaps secondarily—to the leading of an upright life, to the performance of those duties which are essential to the best interest of society, to the inculcation of those traits of character which tend to ennoble the human race, to the acquisition of that knowledge which, through unbiased investigation, leads to truth. But it demands unquestioning faith in its unproved and unprovable dogmas ; and as a reward for such faith—*without a single other requisite*—it promises an eternity of bliss. Is it possible to put in the place of such a religion anything more reasonless or demoralizing?

Rev. J. W. Chadwick says : “ The Nicene creed (the basis of Christianity) is all theology, *without a syllable of ethics.*”

Indeed, so far from the Christian religion encouraging morality, there are many and notable instances of its having discouraged it. Rev. A. H. Lewis, D. D., informs us that “immoral houses were licensed in London, in the twelfth

century ; *the Bishop of Westminster receiving the proceeds of such licenses.*”

Do we not want to exchange for something better, a religion, the base career of whose sacred (!) officials is a matter of history and which baseness extended to nearly all members of the Christian church ?

Hallam says : “All writers concur in stigmatizing the dissoluteness which prevailed among the clergy.”

Do we not want a better religion than that which makes possible the immoralities of the confessional ?

Do we not want a religion of a higher moral tone than that regarding which Luther said that a man might commit the grossest immorality, “if he only believed enough on the Lord Jesus Christ ?”

Lecky says : “The fathers laid it down as a distinct proposition that pious frauds are justifiable, and even laudable.”

Guizot says : “The church sank into barbarism. All remains of Roman civilization disappeared. All became buried in complete barbarism. On one side the rude barbarians, entering into the church, became bishops and priests ; on the other, the bishops, adopting the barbarian life became, without quitting their bishoprics, chiefs of bands of marauders and wandered over the country, pillaging and destroying, like so many companions of Clovis.”

Do we not want a more honest and more civilized religion than that which Christianity has proved itself to be ?

In place of the teachings of Christianity regarding woman ; that maternity is a reproach ; that the wife shall be stoned to death, by her husband, if she should dare to hold any theological views different from his ; that woman is not the equal, but the inferior of man ; that she must hold herself in subjection to him ; that she must observe “silence”—not being “permitted to speak” in his august (!) presence ; that man shall “rule over” her ; that she shall be “under obedience” to him ; that she shall “submit” and “be subject” to him “in everything ;” that if she be curious enough to want to know any-

thing she must "ask her husband," even though she may be vastly his intellectual superior.

There is nothing more disgusting and vulgar than the teachings of the "church fathers" with regard to women; as a specimen thereof, St. John Chrysostom says that "of all wild beasts, the most dangerous is woman." The influence of these teachings has caused the degeneracy of woman, as is clearly set forth by the late Professor Boyesen of Columbia University, New York City, who says: "It is beyond dispute that Christianity has been the strongest of a number of coöperating factors to accomplish such degeneracy."

The Christian church antagonized the efforts of paganism—in the earlier centuries—to grant more liberal laws to women.

Frederick May Holland says: "The subjection of women to men, of citizens to sovereigns, of laity to clergy, of reason to faith, was insured by the organization of the Christian hierarchy."

In place of the bigotry of Christianity, let us have the comparatively tolerant religions of Brahmanism, of Buddhism, of Islamism, of Parseism, of Confucianism and, above all, of Paganism.

In place of those educational institutions, under control of the Christian church, which cling to theology and which so largely exclude the teachings of modern thought and the most advanced sciences, we would have taught the latest discoveries in the field of research.

Do we want a religion which demands silence of the "higher (or any other) criticism," and which prefers the stagnant and dangerous pool of mental sloth, rather than the agitated and healthful and truth-inciting contact with intelligent thought?

Do we not want a religion which teaches truth in place of the false statements of zealous churchmen, in regard to the progress of civilization, which was checked by Christianity, especially when that system of religion became dominant in the fourth century, and which for over one thousand years was the most bitter enemy to social, industrial and educational advancement?

And do we not want a more reliable religion than that of Christianity, which insists on denying the existence of charitable and remedial institutions long before the time when Christ appeared on the earth? That hospitals, insane asylums and other humanitarian establishments were known more than two thousand years ago is as truly history as any other historical event which is recorded with reference to India, Egypt or any other ancient country.

Do we not want a more truthful religion, "in place of" Christianity, which persists in repeating falsehoods regarding supposed fearful death-bed scenes of those who have refused to believe in the horrible doctrine of damnation for unbelief in unbelievable dogmas? Abundant evidence—from physicians, truth-telling clergymen and others—has proved the falsity of such death-bed "writhings."

What should be put in the place of Christianity which "changeth not," which adheres to creeds which were formulated centuries ago and which the changed circumstances and advanced thought of the day show to be obsolete? Take, for example, the "Westminster Confession of Faith," which was the offspring of the unreasoning thought of 250 years ago, and which is largely repudiated by thinking Presbyterians.

W. M. Salter says: "The objection to the old creeds is simply to their being made obligatory on the present."

This fact, in connection with the one that there is a constantly increasing independence of thought in the church, accounts for the more numerous heresy trials of later years.

Let us get back to the views of Epiphanius—one of the church fathers—who held that "wickedness was the only heresy." Let us look with the hopeful eyes of Rev. Norman McLeod, the Scottish divine, whose vision of what was to take the place of the Christianity of to-day, revealed that "neither Calvinism, nor Presbyterianism, nor Thirty-nine Articles, nor High-Churchism, nor Low-Churchism, nor any *existing* organization, can be the church of the future."

It is asked what shall be given in place of a religion which sanctioned the infamous slave trade. It being shamelessly

contended that, in exculpation of such infamy these ignorant, wretches were benefited by being brought out of the darkness of barbarianism into the light of Christianity !

Don't we want something better in place of a Christianity nine-tenths of the pulpits of which religion sided with slavery or were wanting in courage to range themselves on the side of liberty in our four years' war, which finally resulted in the emancipation of the slaves, but without the aid (except of a very few) of the "preachers of righteousness?"

Is the question asked, what shall be given in place of a religion, which, by reason of there being found within the lids of its sacred (!) writings, the words "Thou shalt not permit a witch to live," has cost the human race many millions of lives ; which religion by its irrational zeal, its insane infatuation, prosecuted crusade after crusade against an unoffending people till additional millions of lives were sacrificed ; and which religion, for full fifteen centuries, has been the principal cause of war, with all its attendant horrors ?

Professor Felix L. Oswald says : " From the tenth to the end of the sixteenth century not less than three million 'heretics'—i.e., scholars and free enquirers—had to expiate their love of truth in the flames of the stake."

The same author says ; " The extermination of the Moriscos reduced the population of Spain by seven millions ;" and adds ; " The dogma of exclusive salvation by faith made forcible conversion an act of mercy and stimulated those wars of aggression that have cost the lives of more than thirty millions of our fellow men."

Add hereto the estimate of Las Casas of the murder in Cuba of twelve millions of men, all—as Schopenhauer says—"for the sake of spreading the gospel ; and because all those who were not Christians were not regarded as human beings."

O Liberty ! what crimes are committed in thy name !" cried Madame Roland.

But more truthful still is the utterance : " O Christianity ! what *greater* crimes have been committed in *thy* name !"

The same warlike spirit has manifested itself in the last half



of this century, more especially by the most Christian nation, Great Britain.

In the unrighteous Anglo-Chinese wars of 1857-60 *eighteen out of twenty-three* of the Christian *bishops* in the House of Lords voted for war, against the earnest protests of Lord Derby, Lord Russell, Disraeli, Cobden, Bright, Gladstone and other humane and justice-loving English statesmen.

But should it not be asked : Are not these bishops merely illustrating the spirit of their Master, who, the Bible tells us, "came not to bring peace but a sword?"

This spirit of *murder* is showing itself to-day in the attitude of all the Christian nations of Europe, where standing armies of many millions of men are ready, and on comparatively slight provocation, to clutch the throats of their brother Christians.

Christianity has also carried this war spirit into the next world, for we read there was once "war in heaven," according to the record of "St. John the Divine."

What shall be given in place of Christianity which selects and proclaims such a tyrannical and cruel utterance as was attributed to Christ, viz : "They who will not that I shall rule over them, bring hither and slay them before me;" or, "He that believeth not shall be damned;" or, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels?"

What shall be given in place of a religion, the founder of which announced that he came to engender bitterness in the home, to stir up strife in the household, to cause contention in the family, "to set a man at variance against his father and the daughter against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law?" Can any member of a loving family say that we do not want something *very* much better than such a religion? "An hundred-fold" is the premium and "everlasting life" the reward Christ offers to those who can be induced to forsake brothers, sisters, father, mother, wife or children—for "His name's sake!!" Surely is not *any* other religion, or *no* religion, *far* better than such unnatural and heartless teachings?

Do we not want a kindlier and more cheerful religion in place of that which requires us to "mourn and weep" and which proclaims, "Woe unto you that laugh?"

Buckle says: "All social pleasures are denounced (by believers in the Bible.) . . . Whatever was natural was wrong."

Surely, we can find some teachings that can be put to advantage, in place of a religion which tells us that if an eye offend it must be plucked out; that if a hand offend it must be cut off; that we must not resist evil; that if assaulted on one cheek the other must be turned; that if a thief makes way with your coat, you must give up your cloak also; that no thought should be taken for the morrow; that you must not refuse to give to any beggar or to lend to any borrower.

The teachings of such lawlessness, such encouragement to oppression, to theft, to improvidence, to pauperism, to vagrancy, to idleness and consequently to other vices, would produce a state of society infinitely worse than anarchism, resulting in social chaos. Is there a single reputable Christian who desires such a condition of society "in place of" that which is governed by principle, by justice, by right, by industry, by frugality, by the experience of enlightened practices and the promptings of enlightened thought and action?

What should be given in place of a religion that resorted to the thumb-screw, the rack, the iron boot? Colonel Ingersoll says: "I did not appreciate the infamies that have been committed in the name of religion, until I *saw* the iron *arguments* which Christians used."

It will not do to say that such cruelties were practiced in an intolerant age. The spirit of Christianity towards those who have the courage to reject its unseemly theologies is precisely the same (not differing even in degree) as it was in the sixteenth century. Proofs of which may be found in the unjust and tyrannical enactment of laws exempting churches from taxation; which require religious teachings in our public schools; which take the property of unreligious tax-payers to

pay the salaries of chaplains in our halls of legislation, in our army and navy and in our prisons ; and which may also be found in the attempt now being made to force a recognition of the Christian religion by an amendment to the Constitution of the United States. And when that is done it is not too much to predict that every act in conflict with the (amended) Constitution will be punishable by the same acts of bigotry which have disgraced, not alone Christianity, but humanity itself. It is easy to foretell their argument. They would say, "Is not this (heretical) act in violation of our Constitution?" and if so, "Why should not such violations, such treasonable acts, be (severely) punished?" So that Free Thinkers may prepare themselves for extreme measures when Christians get control of the government ; such measures, indeed, as will have their parallel, it may be, in the bigotry, persecution and torture of the Inquisition.

In place of Christianity which teaches that it is right to do right for fear of punishment or for hope of reward, we would substitute that it is right to do right, because it is right so to do ; a principle infinitely superior to any religion that ever existed.

The same question was asked of Luther, by Roman Catholics—"What are you going to give us in place of our religion?" It was then said that "Luther knew how to destroy, but not how to construct." These same questions are being asked to-day of those who are merely endeavoring to eliminate from the religion of Christianity the errors, the cruelties, the obscenities, which are numerously found in the book which is the basis of that religion, and to fill their places with truth, compassion, refinement, to induce belief in reasonable creeds, to abandon obsolete dogmas, to have done with the superstitious belief in supernaturalism.

In place of the Roman Catholic religion, Protestants adopted as a principle a religion which recognized the right of private judgment ; and now that Protestantism has proved false to that principle, why should we not re-assert that which exalts mental

liberty above creeds, which puts justice and reason and truth above theological domination?

Heresy trials in the Protestant church show that there is little difference between the Romish and the Protestant church in the matter of tolerant thought and honest opinion.

*Both* churches are exacting and bigoted and both are (more or less) in alliance, in the great conflict which for centuries has been waging between theology and unhampered thought.

It is asked, can there be a religion of more gentleness and kindness than that of Christianity? Listen to the answer of one well versed in ecclesiastical lore: "History shows that religion has been more relentless under the auspices of Christian theology than under those of all other theologies combined. . . . It is the only fiend in the universe cruel enough to burn a man to death, by slow fire, for merely holding an opinion."

Can it be seriously asked "what is to be put in the place of" a religion which, as Colonel Ingersoll has expressed it, "sends infants to perdition to increase God's glory and murderers to heaven to show the riches of his grace?"

Is the human mind capable of inventing aught that is more atrocious? And yet every orthodox Christian subscribes to this infamous doctrine.

Is it asked, what textbook can be given in place of the Bible, which according to Professor Ladd of Yale University, "contains probably a hundred thousand errors," and according to John E. Remsburg has "outraged decency by its obscene recitals?"

Do we ask what can be given in place of the God of the Bible? Let the late Rev. Theodore Parker of Boston answer: "Vishnu, with a necklace of skulls, is a figure of love and mercy, compared to the God of the old Testament."

"The God of the Bible is a moral monstrosity."—(Beecher.) In place of the Christian dogmas—of the fall of man and of redemption—let us adopt the scientific fact of the *rise* of man, from a lower order of being; which fact entirely dispenses with the doctrine of the atonement and all that follows in its train.

Is it not desirable to have an investigating, progressive religion, in place of Christianity, which ignores reason, retards discovery and antagonizes science ; as is clearly and amply demonstrated by Gibbon, Hume, Lecky, Buckle, Draper, Andrew D. White and other students and teachers of the truths of history ?

In place of the Christian religion, which has discouraged the spread of intelligence and which applied the torch to libraries in Tripoli, Alexandria, Mexico and Grenada, let us have a religion that seeks to diffuse knowledge, that fears not collections of facts, that encourages investigation, that is stimulated by a desire for truth, that believes in progressive thought, that gives the hospitality of the brain to every new idea or honest thought.

In place of the Apostles, ' or any other unreasonable and unsympathetic, creed, let us recite : I believe in the divine influence of natural affection ; in the Catholic church of humanity ; in the communion of heart and of brain ; in forgiveness, charitableness and tolerance ; in the exaltation and cultivation of the nobler and finer attributes of our nature ; in the immortality of good deeds, great thoughts and grand achievements. To which may be added the creed of Ingersoll : " I believe in the fireside ; in the democracy of home ; in the republicanism of the family ; in liberty, equality and love."

In one of Colonel Ingersoll's lectures he says, " We got Shakespeare in the place of Calvin," the latter having died in the same year that the former was born ; and the Colonel has expressed the opinion that the world profited by the exchange ; and in which opinion, all who are not heartless or barbarous will readily acquiesce.

The exchange of the " church fathers " and all the other theologians who ever lived, for the few scientists of the closing years of this century, has been of incalculable benefit to the world. How greatly has intelligent thought been stimulated by the heroic attacks on the superstitions of the church by Voltaire, to whom (as the late James Russell Lowell has said)

“we owe it—more than to any one man—that we can think and speak as we choose!”

How well we could spare all the sermons of all the priests and ministers who ever existed for one leaf of the common sense and unanswerable logic of Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason!* How supremely absurd appear all the dogmas which the pulpits of to-day are inculcating in credulous minds, by the side of those grand truths, brilliant thoughts and eloquent utterances which come from the lips of the most fascinating speaker of the English language, of whom the generous minded Rev. H. N. Thomas, D. D., of Chicago, says, “There is perhaps a place and a need for Colonel Ingersoll's work, *and more people look to him as a religious teacher and guide than to any other teacher.*”

Is it seriously believed that no better religion can be put in the place of one, the textbook of which religion unequivocally advocates polygamy, slavery and intemperance?

Can any one whose heart beats responsive to those struggling against despotic rule, seriously ask what will you give us “in place of” a religion which upholds tyranny by proclaiming, “The powers that be are ordained of God;” thus stigmatizing the acts of the freedom-loving heroes of all ages, and in our own country of the noble and self-sacrificing patriots of the Revolution in striving for and securing the blessings of liberty, and creating a history, the grand achievements of which have no parallel in the annals of time? Christianity takes to task all who participated in our efforts at independence of the mother country, for *daring* to disobey the “ordinance of God” in converting the colonies of George III. into the “great Republic.” Shade of Washington! the Christian religion charges you with crime, the crime of loving liberty and of battling for the rights of man. Franklin, Jefferson, Paine and their compeers—all, likewise, criminals!

Do we not want a religion which discriminates between the acts of the humane and those of the brute murderer, in place of a religion which receives to its bosom a man who was guilty of a score of murders, as was the case of the wretch Holmes,

recently executed, and who has become a sanctified saint, with all the benefits which the consolations of Christianity confer, including an eternity of bliss in the heavenly kingdom? This illustrates the beauty (!) of the Christian doctrine of eleventh-hour repentance. Holmes realized the forgiving, loving teaching of Christianity, that "though your sins be as *scarlet* they shall be made whiter than snow," and while Holmes is escorted by myriads of angels to the gates of the new Jerusalem and furnished with a harp with which to accompany his song of praise for the enchantments which surround him, many of his poor victims are suffering the pangs of undying torment. So says Christianity.

Do we not want a more *honorable* religion in place of one which has deliberately appropriated a college to its own use, against the known desires and in violation of the expressed wishes of its founder? The history of Girard College, of Philadelphia, and its perversion from the grand intentions for it, of Stephen Girard, to the teaching of the unmeaning theology of Christianity, forms one of the most dastardly acts of treachery and robbery that any history can furnish.

Do we not want a more rational religion "in the place" of that which has furnished so many imitations of Abraham offering up Isaac; *actually* sacrificing their own innocent flesh and blood because those who are emotional have believed that the inspired (!) book teaches such insane and inhuman sacrifices?

What shall be given in place of a religion which repudiates reason and the supporters of which religion are (to quote from Benjamin Kidd's *Social Evolution*) "engaged in a remorseless and relentless struggle in which *the opponent proves to be none other than his own reason?*" To quote further from Kidd's book: "A *rational* religion is a scientific impossibility."

Do we not want a better religion in place of that, which, by stimulating the emotional faculties of our nature, has resulted in deficient intellectual vigor, and which has filled our insane asylums as no other cause, than that of Christianity, has done?

What shall we give in place of a religion which encouraged an asceticism that could transform a noble human being into (as Lecky has said) "a hideous, sordid and emaciated maniac, without knowledge, without patriotism, without natural affection; passing his life in a long routine of useless and atrocious self-torture and quailing before the ghostly phantoms of his delirious brain?"

Surely there is something purer and more in accordance with nature than a religion which encourages (as does Christianity) women to break the ties of family, to render callous natural affection and immure themselves in voluntary prison houses.

During the trial of the late Professor Swing in Chicago for heresy, the articles of the Presbyterian faith then published were so shocking to those members of his church who had never read them that they imagined them to be forgeries. These articles of faith are now kept as far as possible from the eyes of intelligent Christians, and yet these articles are sufficiently known and comprehended to be discredited by those who are in search of facts and who are no longer believers by simple "faith alone."

Do we not want some more honest religion in place of that which insincerely and hypocritically recognizes creeds which were formulated centuries ago and which the ministers of such religion *know* are untrue and unbelievable, and which ministers tell their congregations what they *know* to be utterly indefensible? On this subject Dean Alford says: "There's many a thing said in many a sermon that, should the preacher enter a room, with an intelligent parishioner, eye to eye, he dare not stick to."

Do we not want some better religion than that which falsely insists that Jesus had no natural father; when the very book which Christians claim to be infallible says, as distinctly as it can, that Joseph *was* the father of Jesus, by giving—in Matthew and Luke—the genealogy of Jesus; *both* accounts bringing it down, *through Joseph*, to Jesus? True, in another part of the sacred (!) record it says he was "conceived by the Holy



Ghost," and in still another part, that he was the "only begotten Son of God." Thus the Bible tells us that Joseph was the father of Jesus, that the Holy Ghost was his father and that God was his father. Does not such a "Trinity" of contradictions show the inconsistency of the Christian religion?

Do we not want some better religion in the place of that which practices the deception of teaching the sacredness of a certain day, when they who so teach *know* that there is no warrant for such teaching? Christians, without the slightest of recognized authority, are most strenuous in the religious observance of Sunday—giving (as Whittier has expressed it) "six days to mammon, one to cant."

Is it asked what is to be given in place of *faith* in the Christian religion? It may be answered, we would have faith in humanity, faith in immutable physical laws, faith in the unvarying conditions which control the moral nature of man, faith in an upright life, faith in the eternal principle of justice, of right and of truth. Do not these indicate a sublimer faith than can be realized through faith in a religion of unproved dogmas and improbable myths?

"In place of" the astronomy, the geology and the biology of Moses, which Christianity insists is true, surely we have a more intelligent estimate of these sciences from the discoveries of Copernicus, of Humboldt and of Darwin.

Can we not find some religion that illustrates more sincerity among those who profess belief in it and more fidelity to its founder than is shown by the treatment of Christ by his disciples; that false friendship, by which he was doubted by one, denied by another, betrayed by still another and finally forsaken by *all*?

President Patton of Princeton University says, "Christianity is not a life, but a dogma." This is an honest statement of the orthodox Christian religion. In place of such a doctrine; in place of all the dogmas that have been formulated by all the councils of the church; in place of all its creeds and confessions of faith; in place of all the professions of belief by all the zealots of christendom; let us offer the simple teaching and

striving for an upright life, let us build up character, let us encourage refinement, purity, good deeds, humane feelings, generous impulses, kindly thoughts, beneficent acts; in fine, let us reverse the position claimed for Christianity and declare that religion should be a life and not a dogma. What possible influence on the aims and aspirations of exalted character can be had by belief in the dogmas of predestination, sanctification, justification, effectual calling, baptism, the Trinity, the atonement, in the resurrection, the immaculate conception, or the "procession" of the Holy Ghost?

Does it make any one happier or better to believe in the Westminster "Confession of Faith"—Chapter X.—which reads: "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved . . . , *others not elected cannot be saved*"?

In the place of theological religion we would substitute the religion of ethical culture; in place of superstition we would put rational thought; in place of the *supernatural*, the natural; in place of fear for the future, we would content ourselves with the joys of the present, and hope for their continuance. In place of the "fear of God," of the evil one, of endless torment, let us be attracted to a religion of confidence, of trust, of hope, of cheer and of love. For the futility of prayer, we would offer the labor of the hands and the exercise of the brain. In place of useless and senseless church creeds let us interest ourselves in whatever may tend to benefit mankind.

In place of the unlettered, ignorant, superstitious past, we would put the cultivated, intelligent, realistic present.

In place of admitting the possibility of the truth of miracles, let us scrutinize the character of the evidence by which miracles are imposed upon the credulous.

In place of recognizing authority as truth (as taught by Christianity,) let us rather regard truth as authority (as reason teaches.)

In place of the Christian church, hemmed in by its restricted, ignorant and cruel beliefs, denying admission to the noblest and most intelligent of the race and rejecting the most beautiful and gladsome and useful lessons of life; we would, with

Colonel Ingersoll, join the "great church that holds the world within its star-lit aisles ; that claims the great and good of every race and clime ; that finds with joy the grains of gold in every creed and floods with light and love the germs of good in every soul."

In place of the Christian religion, with its pretentious sanctuaries, its arrogant and pharisaical officials, its warlike teachings, its injustice, its cant, its want of truthfulness and its lessons of hate, may we be able to realize in the not distant future the grand and rational "Dream of Akbar," as portrayed by Tennyson—

"I dream'd  
That stone by stone I rear'd a sacred fane,  
A Temple, neither Pagod, Mosque, nor Church,  
But loftier, simpler, always open-door'd  
To every breath from heaven ; and Truth and Peace  
And Love and Justice came and dwelt therein."

## THE REPUBLIC IN DANGER.

PROBABLY very few persons are aware of the danger to civil liberty now threatened in this country. Those who founded the government did so with a jealous eye to all religious encroachments upon the political liberties of the people. These founders of the Republic sought to profit by the fearful results of an alliance of the church with the state in other countries. They had read the bloody pages of religious history. They were warned by the intolerance, the persecutions, the tortures, the butcheries, which religious zeal and ecclesiastical bigotry had accomplished against those whose only crime was the claiming of natural liberty and the assertion of those rights to which they were entitled by a proper recognition of the principle of civil and religious freedom : the right to hold their honest opinions and to express their honest thoughts on matters of religion.

There are not many Roman Catholics who take the patriotic view "that the state with us has no religion and that it cannot and ought not to recognize any church," and yet this is the liberal-minded utterance of Father Stafford of Baltimore.

In violation of this principle, the statute books of every state in our Union abound with laws which are a virtual recognition of the Christian religion ; and thus is the Christian Church imposed or forced upon the people of these states.

Every state (California excepted) has its Sunday laws, with more or less severe penalties for their violation.

In fourteen states the law relating to the taking of an oath is such that no conscientious agnostic can adopt it. In some states, like it is in Arkansas, "No person who denies the being

of a God shall hold office in civil departments of the state nor be competent to testify as witness in any court."

Who knows that there is such a "being" as God? The clergy of every denomination may be challenged to bring the slightest proof of what they know—not what they think, or suppose or guess, but what they actually know about the personality they call "God."

In thirteen of the states are what are called "Blasphemy laws," which consist of expressing disbelief in God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost, the Trinity, the Christian religion or the Bible; such disbelief being differently expressed in the laws of the different states. All such laws are in contravention of the Constitution of the United States, which provides that no religious test shall be required as a qualification to office and no law respecting an establishment of religion shall be made. They are likewise in contravention of the provisions of nearly every one of the constitutions of the respective states. The substance of these provisions may be illustrated by the words of the Constitution of Colorado, viz. : "No person shall be denied any civil or political right, privileges or capacity on account of his opinions concerning religion." In face of the constitutional guarantees of the several states, to all citizens, that they are entitled to every right which any other citizen possesses; in our public schools, non-sectarians are taxed to support such schools, in which are heard the reading of sectarian books, the singing of sectarian hymns and the utterance of sectarian prayers; the tax-payer's money being spent for Bibles and for hymn and prayer books, in violation of the principle which refuses to tax those whose views on the question of religion in the public schools are ignored.

What have these religious exercises to do, necessarily, with education, any more than they have to do with the teaching of carpentry, or of dancing, or of art. Children are sent to public schools to learn what is profitable and useful in this world and not to be instructed in the dogmas pertaining to some other world, of which they know absolutely nothing.

There are also those (and millions of them) who are opposed

to religious exercises in our congress, in our legislature, in our prisons, in the army and navy, and who are opposed to the paying from the public treasury of chaplains ; such opponents denying the right of government to tax them for such purposes.

Mr. Maguire, M. C., from California, voices the sentiment of every lover of justice in saying as he did in the House of Representatives, "There is an establishment of religion and there are repeated appropriations for the establishment and promotion of religion here, which we ought to stop."

The Army Register furnishes some particulars regarding the pay of army and navy chaplains, which amounts annually to \$84,600 for army chaplains ; \$60,000 for navy chaplains.

It is estimated that during our four years of civil war the chaplains in the army cost the United States government six millions of dollars, and those of the navy two millions—or a total of \$8,000,000.

On February 21, 1896, Rev. C. J. Ochsclaeger, of Richmond, Va., was invited to act as chaplain of the House of Assembly, but declined, saying, "I do not believe in opening a promiscuous political body with prayer. It is an abuse of prayer, and an unnatural union of church and state. . . . The states, which the Assembly represents, has nothing to do with prayer." Rev. Dr. Hawthorne of Atlanta, Ga., says, "In appointing men to these offices (chaplains) and paying them for their services with money taken from its own treasury, the state does more than protect the Christian religion. It patronizes it, and any government patronage of religion is a violation of the rights of conscience. . . . While these abuses of civil government exist let no man speak of this country as a land of religious liberty."

The constitution of many of the states provide (as does that of Illinois) that "No person shall be required to attend or support any ministry or place of worship against his consent," and yet by the practice of exempting church property from taxation, are not very many taxpayers required to support places of worship against their consent? It makes no difference whatever whether the legislators of the several states actually

donate to the churches an amount of money equal to the taxes for which they are (or should be) liable or whether they exempt such churches from taxation. The state, virtually, pays the tax of every church, by reason of its exemption from taxation. How can good, law-abiding, Christian people reconcile their consciences to such transgressions of law and how can Christians, who profess to be honest, take, illegally, money that belongs to others?

There are laws also in many of the states against "appropriations for sectarian purposes." Is not exempting property from taxation in effect making appropriations for sectarian purposes?

Besides the indirect method of appropriations to churches by exemptions from taxation, churches and other sectarian institutions receive—directly—from the state, large sums of money, in total disregard of laws on the statute books of most of the states which distinctly and emphatically forbid such appropriations.

*The Truth Seeker Annual* for 1886 gives the amount donated by the state of New York for sixteen years (additional to what the churches get by being exempted from tax) and the result shows a present of \$13,000,000 to the Romish, and \$8,500,000 to the Protestant church.

Another great injustice is the committing, or the effort to commit, the people of the country to a recognition of the Christian religion by the issuing of proclamations setting apart certain days to be observed religiously by all the people. Fortunately there are but few who heed such proclamations, but they are nevertheless most intolerable pieces of assurance on the part of those who issue them. They are contrary to the spirit of secular government and ought not to be allowed in a government which recognizes no religion.

The laws which are most prevalent and which are found on the statute book of every state in the Union (with the exception of California), are the Sunday laws, and yet there are no laws, the origin of which is so little understood—or which are more senseless, or which so interfere with the rights and privileges

of the people. There is not a Christian throughout the country who can give one satisfactory reason why Sunday should be kept as a religious day. There is not one professor of the Christian religion who can furnish the slightest authority for the religious observance of that day. These Sunday laws are in violation of the Constitution of the United States, and they also violate the most cherished principle of equal and exact justice to all. There is probably nothing in our history which shows the abandonment of this principle as the persistence with which these Sunday laws are now enforced and there is no clearer indication of the danger to our Republic than is shown in these unrighteous laws. If it is wrong to pass laws which would prohibit people from praying on Sunday, why is it not equally wrong to prohibit playing on that day?

The Sunday laws are the growth of many decades in our history. They show a gradual but steady departure from the views of the proper relations between religion and the government which were entertained by the patriots of the earlier days of our national existence.

In 1829 petitions were presented to Congress for the discontinuance of Sunday mails. Col. Richard M. Johnson, as chairman of the Senate and House Committee to which said petitions were referred, reported as follows: "Among all the religious persecutions with which almost every page of modern history is stained, no victim ever suffered but for the violation of what government denominated 'the law of God.' To prevent a similar train of evils in this country, the Constitution has wisely withheld from our government the power of defining the 'divine law.' It is a right reserved to each citizen. . . . Extensive religious combinations to effect political objects are always dangerous. . . . All religious despotism commences by combination and influence, and when the influence begins to operate upon the political institutions of the country, the civil power soon bends under, and the catastrophe of other nations furnish an awful warning of the consequence."

This report met, generally, the approval of the people at that time. Various states took active part in the matter.



The legislature of Illinois sent instructions to their representatives in Washington to oppose the movement against Sunday mails, stating their belief that "such an innovation upon our republican institutions would establish a precedent of dangerous tendency to our privileges as freemen by inviting a legislative decision in a religious controversy." The Sunday law fanatics, since those days, have become bolder, more determined and more disregardful than ever of the rights of those who differ from them in opinion. The *American Sentinel*, though a Christian paper, is doing excellent service in battling for the principle of church and state separation. Alluding to the action taken in 1829 against the efforts then made to stop the mails on Sunday, it said that such action "seemed to settle the question for upwards of sixty years, but the Sunday law fever has now broken out anew, and with perhaps an added virulence. A contest is on—the end of which no one can tell!" The *Evangel and Sabbath Outlook*, also a religious paper, edited by Rev. A. H. Lewis, D. D., has likewise done valuable aid to the cause of abolishing all Sunday laws.

There are other religious newspapers and there are church organizations, which are (more or less) opposed to our Sunday laws.

The ministers of the Lutheran church recently declared, "We honestly believe that the Sunday law in its present form, fosters hypocrisy and sham and opens a wide door for much that is unholy and morally wrong, instead of promoting the moral welfare of the community. . . . We do most emphatically protest against the confounding of church and state, which is hereby involved."

The persecutions of Seventh Day Baptists, in these closing years of the nineteenth century, read like a chapter from the history of the days of Torquemada. Here are upright (Christian) people fined, imprisoned and compelled to serve in chain gangs; all because they believe what the Bible teaches, viz., that the seventh day (and not the first day) of the week is the Sabbath. Fifteen states of this Union have disgraced themselves by such laws as made possible the treatment of honest,

conscientious citizens, as though they had been really guilty of crime, merely for doing some necessary or proper work on a day on which their religion justifies their working. The consciences of these people require that they shall keep Saturday as a sacred day ; and the government requires that they shall also keep Sunday in the same manner ; thus giving them but five days as "bread winners," while others are given six days. Are these people awarded, by government, the equal rights which other citizens possess ?

Is there anything more arbitrary than the acts of government which are dictated by these Sabbatarians ?

Such wrongs are an indication of the danger to the stability of the Republic, should the enforcement of them be permitted to continue. Stewart Chaplin, in the *Examiner*, states the Baptist position regarding Sunday laws to be that "to permit the state to interfere at all with anyone's religious—or non-religious—observances, is fraught with the gravest danger ; and the only true policy is to keep the state out of religious matters."

The absurd "Barber's law," which existed at one time in California, was declared by its Supreme Court to be unconstitutional, "no reason having been shown why the followers of one useful and unobjectional occupation should be debarred from the right to labor on certain days and not upon others. When any such class is singled out and put under the criminal ban of such a law as this, the law is not only special, unjust and unreasonable in its operation, but it works an invasion of individual liberty."

As a further evidence of returning sense, the *American Sentinel* tells us that a despatch has recently been received from New Orleans, La., stating that after ten years' trial of the Sunday law, the Louisiana legislature has finally decided to abandon it. So far as New Orleans is concerned, evidence upon the question of the repeal of the law was brought before the Judiciary Committee of the State Senate ; every member of the committee being opposed to its further enforcement. It was testified by four of the five members of the police board

that it tended greatly to demoralize the police force and to encourage blackmail. It was also testified that the attempt to enforce the Sunday law drew upon the strength of the police department, so that not enough men were left to properly police the city, also that arrest for drunkenness had not decreased, but increased since the law passed. The same experience is observable in every city where these unjust and absurd Sunday laws are enforced. Besides what business is it of anyone, so long as I do not interfere with my neighbor, what my own private convictions of duty call upon me to perform on Sunday or on any other day of the week?

But sad to relate, the Supreme Court of the United States (the *Truth Seeker* tells us) handed down, May 28th, last, a decision, delivered by Judge Harlan, affirming the constitutionality of the section of the code of Georgia, which prohibits the running of freight trains in that state on Sunday.

But what think you is the basis of that decision? It is that "a state has the power to protect the health and the morals of the people!" The inference or insinuation being that those who do not favor the religious observance of Sunday, are of necessity, immoral persons! Was there ever a more arrogant or insulting claim?

To the honor of Chief Justice Fuller and one or two of his associates, they dissented from a decision which (virtually) charged non-Sunday observers with immorality.

The "Woman's National Sabbath Alliance," recently organized, has for its object to "conserve the sanctity of Sunday," and the prevention of every kind of amusement or entertainment, including Sunday newspapers, bicycling, driving, or other means of traveling on Sunday.

Professor Felix L. Oswald, in *North American Review*, January, 1896, says: "That belief (in the possibility of bettering the world by the suppression of popular pastimes.) the key-stone dogma of anti-naturalism, asserted itself in rancorous fury against the 'worldliness' of physical culture; against the pagan worship of joy; against the Easter firesides, May poles and round dances of our medieval ancestors; against the enter-

tainment of the modern theater, and finally in the enforcement of a mawkish quietism on the day when a large plurality of our workingmen get their chance for out-door sports."

What is called the "Continental Sabbath" is denounced by all religious people, and yet there is more rational enjoyment, more propriety observed and more true morality practised on Sunday in Continental Europe than under the restrictions of the Puritan Sabbath in Great Britain and America. Are we not fast retrograding to the earlier years of our history when what was called "Sunday desecration" was punishable with death?

"What can the enforcement of Sabbath observance be but a union of church and state?"—(J. B. Thayer.)

But the culmination of fanaticism is in the efforts which for years have been and are now being made to compel the people of this country to recognize the Christian religion by amending the preamble of the Constitution. These efforts are being made against the warnings of those who founded our government and against the earnest protests of every true and un-biased patriot—Christian, Jew or Gentile—who sees danger to the Republic in a union of the Christian (or any other) church with the state.

The precise language of this proposed amendment—which was introduced into Congress, January 25th, 1894, by Senator Frye in the Senate, and by Representative Morse in the House—is as follows: "We, the people of the United States, devoutly acknowledging the Supreme authority and just government of Almighty God in all the affairs of men and nations; grateful to Him for our civil and religious liberty and encouraged by the assurance of His Word to invoke His guidance, as a Christian nation according to His appointed way, through Jesus Christ."

Thus embedding in the Constitution constitutional law which commits every citizen of the United States to a belief in or acknowledgment of a personal deity and to the divinity of Christ (neither of which no one knows anything about), also recog-

nizing the Bible as a true and pure book (notwithstanding its tens of thousands of errors and its notorious obscenities).

Have the zealots who are urging this improper and unjust measure the slightest idea of the imminent danger to the Republic which their success will surely occasion? Do they realize the possibilities—nay, the probabilities—of the most fearful, unnatural, fratricidal war which the pages of history have ever recorded?

Will they refuse to heed the warnings of those who laid the foundations of this grand temple of liberty against any attempt to fasten the church upon the state? Will they respect the words of Washington when he emphasized the utterance, "This is not a Christian nation?" Will they be influenced by the opinions of Jefferson, Franklin, Paine, Madison and Monroe, whose well known views were in opposition to the slightest connection of the church and the state? Will they risk the peace and harmony and prosperity now existing throughout the land? Will they tempt bitterness, enmity, strife and disaster, which their insane efforts to force religion upon an unwilling people will surely accomplish? Will they insist upon going back to ancient and ignorant and bigoted times, and upon establishing a Theocracy on the ruins of popular Democracy? Will they require us to abandon this government "of the people, by the people, for the people" for the rule of some mystical or mythical being, supposed to exist somewhere beyond the clouds?

Col. Ingersoll says: "In the administration of Theocracy all the instruments of torture have been invented. If any man wishes to have God recognized in the Constitution of our country, let him read the history of the Inquisition and let him remember that hundreds of millions of men, women and children have been sacrificed to placate the wrath, or win the approbation of this God."

Will these "God in the Constitution" enthusiasts continue to deny the cherished right of private opinions in matters of religion, the denial of which right has been the most fruitful

source of destruction and carnage ; converting human beings into savage beasts ?

In Goodrich's *Church History* we are told that fifty millions of people became martyrs to the consequences of a union of church and state.

Human nature has not changed since the days when Christians tortured and murdered Bruno, Servetus, Vanini and others. At all events, the spirit which animates Christianity is the same intolerant, persecuting, relentless, cruel, malevolent disposition to-day that it was three centuries ago. Intelligent people should make no mistake on this point. There is no religion in the world that is not only more heartless, but more heedless of the rights of others. It is the nature of Christianity (not alone the teachings of Jesuitism) to believe that "the end justifies the means."

The Christian church has adopted the highwayman method of thought—"we've got the power and we propose to use it." The question as to whether it is right or just has no place in the ethics of Christianity and this has been its prominent characteristic since it first obtained political power in the fourth century.

As illustration—

President Seelye, of Amherst College, says : "The state must teach religion. If its subjects approve, well—if not, the state must not falter."

The *Memphis Appeal* says : "The laws against the violation of one day of rest are unrepealed, and—no matter whether just or unjust—wise or unwise, they should be enforced."

Are not such utterances as these a danger to the Republic ? Shall unjust and cruel laws, which deny equal rights to all and which conflict with the spirit of uniform political liberty, be enforced ?

Is it supposed that those who have inherited an intense love of liberty are to tamely submit to any usurpation that will wrest from them their liberty ?

The violation of the law pertaining to witchcraft was punishable with death ; was it not an unjust law ? and, if so, should

such a law be executed and innocent women perish in flame lit by the fiends of fanaticism?

Did humanity-loving people violate the provisions of the fugitive slave law in refusing to aid, as the law called upon them to do, in its enforcement?

It is urged (and by intelligent and well-meaning people) that every law on the statute book should be executed.

There was once a law which forbade the reading of the Bible. Did Luther and his followers violate it?

By the enforcement of a law in the Netherlands, a large number of Protestants were hanged.

Equally cruel was the enforcement of laws against Catholics, by Protestants.

Enforcement of unjust laws has decimated communities in every age of the world, and caused rivers of blood in the process of such enforcement.

The Czar of Russia and the Queen of England are supposed to reign by "Divine right," and the state church in each is the supreme law of their respective countries. Will the liberty-loving people of this country recognize the President of the United States as holding his office by a similar (divine) right if the religious zealots in this country should succeed in establishing a theocracy here? Will the President of the United States then be absolute judge in matters ecclesiastical?

If the Constitution be amended by the preamble recognizing the Christian religion we would have the incongruity of such recognition followed by the first amendment to the Constitution, saying: "Congress shall pass no law respecting the establishment of religion," or, in other words, Congress would pass a law respecting the establishment of religion and then would follow an act of the Constitution saying that Congress should not pass such a law.

Instead of the disingenuous method of endeavoring to establish religion by a new preamble to the Constitution, why not adopt the more manly and undissembled course of urging a repeal of the first amendment to the Constitution.

After God has been put into the Constitution, whose God

will he be? The Roman Catholics' or the Protestants'? The Calvinists' or the Armenians'? The Seventh Day or the first day Baptists'? The Trinitarians' or the Unitarians'? The God of orthodox, or of liberal Christianity? Is there not great danger that one of these various sects will appropriate the God of the Constitution to its exclusive use and benefit, and consequently persecute other believers in God, as has been the case, for centuries, the world over?

Mr. Madison says: "Who does not see that the same authority which can establish Christianity, in exclusion of all other religions, may establish, with the same ease, any particular sect of Christians?"

Mr. A. T. Jones, in a pamphlet recently published, says that "the National Reform Association is nothing else than Reformed Presbyterianism in politics."

There are open and pronounced enemies of the liberties of the people. The Roman Catholics are largely so. But the Protestants are its secret enemies; they disclaim any sympathy with the union of the church and the state, but are constantly doing all they can in favor of such union, if, only, it can be placed under Protestant control.

The most dangerous enemies of the Republic are the "American Protective Association," the "American Sabbath Union," and the "Women's Christian Temperance Union." While they profess a sacred regard for the principle of separation of church and state, they are the most insidious enemies of that principle.

The *Christian Statesman*, the most ardent of those who are trying to break up the government, is bold enough and frank enough to admit that "the existence of a Christian Constitution would disfranchise every loyally consistent infidel."

Rev. Jonathan Edwards, in a speech at the National Reform Convention in 1873, defined infidels as "Atheists, Deists, Jews and Seventh-Day Baptists."

The term "infidelity" is intended to be a term of reproach, and yet some of the grandest characters in history have been



infidels : Anaxagoras, Socrates, Luther and Jesus himself were infidels to the prevailing religion of their times.

The deceptiveness of the Protestant Church is also shown by quoting from the late Judge Story, who said, "Protestantism, at the very moment it was proclaiming the right of private judgment, prescribed boundaries to that right, beyond which, if anyone dared to pass, he must seal his rashness with the blood of martyrdom."

The "Salvation Army," "Christian Endeavors," the "Evangelical Alliance," and other similar organizations are an undoubted peril to the liberties of the country. Speaking of the "Christian Endeavors," the *American Sentinel* says : "Masked beneath its Christian exterior (disguised even to the mass of Endeavors themselves), there moves with it the deadliest foe of our civil rights and liberties. In the proposed change in the Constitution preamble the arm of this foe is seen uplifted to strike at the Magna Charta of American freedom. In the zealous movement of legislation to compel Sunday observance, its hand is stretched forth to seize upon liberty of conscience. It is high time that the American people were aroused to the peril of the situation."

Are Protestants aware that they are working for the Roman Catholic Church of the future? If Romanism increases in the future, as it has in the past, in this country, and Protestantism declines, as it has been doing, in about the same proportion as the former increases, Roman Catholicism will surely be the controlling religion of the country, and that before long. Protestants insist upon the state being allied to the church. What will they think of the unity of the state and the church, when they wake up to a realizing sense of the fact that the "Church" is the Romish (and not the Protestant) church?

To the credit of many of the clergy and other Christians, these encroachments upon our liberties are not supported by all adherents of this church (Romanist or Protestant), many of them contending for the absolute separation of church and state as a principle. There are many honored names connected with the Christian minority who look with grave interest

upon the efforts of fanaticism to Christianize the country by law, and thus to increase the dangers to the Republic which an association between ecclesiasticism and the state is sure to accomplish.

Mr. George Russell writes to the London *Daily Chronicle* : " I am a firm believer in the spiritual claims and the doctrinal system of the Church of England ; but I think it unjust to teach baptismal regeneration with money from Baptists and Independents ; to teach the Godhead of Christ with money taken from the Jews ; to teach the doctrines of the Holy Trinity with money taken from the Unitarians ; to teach the existence of God and a future life with money taken from Atheists and Agnostics." There are many just such conscientious and justice-loving Christians in this country.

While other nations of the world are endeavoring to free themselves from the control of the church, we seem to be inviting it to participate in the administration of our laws.

In France the concordat or treaty by which the state and the church were bound to each other, and which has existed from the days of the first Napoleon till now, is on the eve of repeal.

The Secretary of the French navy has recently been reprimanded for ordering religious services on board the men-of-war, and at naval stations on a Catholic holiday.

This is in conspicuous contrast with the firing of salutes by a detachment of the Louisiana field artillery in November last in honor of the crowning of the statue to the Virgin Mary in New Orleans.

Great Britain declares through her enlightened Queen, that " all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial protection of the law."

Rev. Dr. Parker of London repudiates the idea of making the Kingdom of Christ " a branch of the civil service."

Senor Castelar, in Spain, a few years since, said that " science and learning must be free from both state and church tyranny."

Germany has lately adopted a new code of laws, by

which that nation refused to recognize Ecclesiastical marriages.

The Hungarian government has recently enacted laws favoring religious equality, civil marriage, and other reforms, in spite of the opposition of the Roman Catholic Church.

London *Truth* says : "Austria has been passing some new laws to prevent the interference of the clerical power in politics."

Italy is noted for the growing secularity of her government.

Mexico is far in advance of the United States in making that country free from Ecclesiastical control. Her constitution provides for the most absolute independence of the state and the church. It abolishes the religious oath. It will not permit the establishment of monasteries. The people of Mexico, realizing the danger to the state of the efforts of the church to control the state, confiscated, in 1867, \$300,000,000 of church property, converting the same to schoolhouses, libraries, museums and other useful purposes.

"America (the United States) presents the anomaly of a republican government and a monarchical religion."—(*Tacoma Church Record*.)

The religious assume that if they are tolerant of the non-religious, that is all that can be required of them ; but the non-religious ask no favors of the religious ; they demand equal rights and the same liberty that is enjoyed by the religious.

The late Rev. Dr. Schoff says : "Toleration is a concession, but liberty is a right ; toleration is a matter of expediency, but liberty is a principle."

Mirabeau says : "There is no crime like the crime against the freedom of the people."

De Tocqueville says : "The church commends herself best to the world by attending to her proper spiritual duties and keeping aloof from political and secular complications."

The people of the south had secretly, but determinedly, prepared for war against the Union, and but few of the people of the north had knowledge of those preparations. So now, but few of us are aware of the secret, but determined, effort

of the Christian Church against the liberties of the people. All over the country these religious fanatics, these treasonable Catilines, are at work in the interest of that worse than a slave oligarchy—a religious autocracy.

We do not realize that we may be on the eve of witnessing the destruction of the most valuable inheritance which has come down to us from the patriots of the revolution. This inheritance—*independence of kingcraft and of priestcraft*—then secured, has no parallel in the blessings bestowed on any people. The liberty, then achieved, is priceless.

Col. Ingersoll says: "Liberty cannot be sacrificed . . . for the sake of anything. It is of more value than anything else. . . . Liberty sustains the same relation to all our virtues that the sun does to life. The world had better go back to barbarism, to the dens, to the caves and lairs of savagery; better lose all art, all invention, than to lose liberty. Liberty is the breath of progress; it is the seed and soil, the heat and rain, of love and joy."

The intensity of Jefferson's devotion to liberty may be illustrated by his saying, "A republic needs a rebellion every twenty years to keep alive the spirit of liberty among the people."

And it is this liberty which the Christian Church is engaged in an effort to overthrow. The liberty which we thought had been secured to us from the foundation of the Republic. Civil liberty, which gives everyone the same rights that are possessed by everyone else; religious liberty, the right to worship any being that may be regarded as Supreme, or the right (also) not to worship; liberty to the orthodox Christian to express his belief in God, the Trinity, the fall of man, the inspiration of the Bible, the existence of a devil, of a heaven and a hell, and the sacredness of Sunday; liberty to the Jew and to the Unitarian to reject the doctrine of the deification of Christ; liberty to the Seventh-Day Baptist and the Hebrew to deny that the first day of the week is a sacred day; liberty to the Agnostic to deny that there is satisfactory evidence of the infallibility of the Bible, of the existence of

a personal embodiment of evil, of a future state, or of a Supreme being.

Will the people of this country abjectly submit to that most tyrannical of yokes, the Christian Church?

Will they become the slaves of the worst oligarchy which ever existed—the oligarchy of Ecclesiasticism?

Are the mouths of independent thinkers, of investigators, of students of knowledge, of teachers of truth, of naturalists, of scientists, to be closed by the ignorant, superstitious believers in a false and degrading religion, and without resistance?

Are the scenes of imprisonment and of torture and of death, which this same Christian religion instigated, in other centuries, to be re-enacted in the closing years of the nineteenth century, and without protest?

Are our astronomers, geologists and biologists, who offend believers in the Mosaic teachings, of a flat earth and of its limited duration and its restrictions as to the age of vegetable and animal life, to be dragged to dungeons, and without resistance?

Are the people of this nation, whose love of liberty is the life of their being, quietly to submit to the consequences of such laws as the fanaticism of Christianity shall direct to be made?

Many times more determined than the resistance to the tyranny of Great Britain and also to the arrogance of the slave power, will be our determined effort at resistance to the tyranny and slavery which Christianity will impose upon us—if, only, it has the power.

No human foresight can predict what, in all probability, will equal in cruelty and carnage what is recorded in the combined pages of the history of all the (almost countless) wars which the church has inaugurated and prosecuted to crush the independent judgment, the freedom of thought, the liberty of expression, on matters as to which there is not a scintilla of knowledge.

The apprehensions here excited are no overdrawn pictures,

but are fully justified by the experience of the past and by the spirit which pervades the Christian church to-day.

Listen to the arrogant utterance of the *Christian Observer* : "When Christians have the power, they have the right."

As Samuel P. Putnam has said : "Let us learn the lessons of history and be watchful over the priceless inheritance of liberty."

Henry Ward Beecher said : "Of all governments, there is no other so bad as the government of an Ecclesiastical class."

Parson Brownlow said : "The worst class of men are preachers."

The New York *Tribune* has said : "The worst despotisms that ever cursed the world were administered in the name, and by the assumed authority of God."

William Howitt, a Christian writer, in England, says : "The barbarities and outrages of the, so-called, Christian race, throughout every region of the world and upon every people that they have been able to subdue, are not to be paralleled by those of any other race, however fierce or untaught, or reckless of mercy or shame, in any age of the world."

That ripe scholar and earnest patriot, Francis Ellingwood Abbott, addressing the "Free Religious Association" at Boston, said : "I see an irrepressible conflict between the Christian and the modern world, which has got to be fought out here in America. . . . The moneyed institutions of that Church are vast ; its social influence is enormous ; its slumbering power for evil is beyond all estimate. . . . The American civilization and the American government have a domestic enemy, in the Christian church, to be compared only to the great slave power of the south. What the anti-slavery society did to the south, this association is doing to the Church, awakening and exasperating an enemy whose hand may yet be raised against the nation's life. . . . The incongruity of American government and American religion is forcing itself on millions of minds. Freedom in either means freedom in both. . . . There is a practical absurdity to be got rid of—the absurdity of maintaining a despotic religion in a free

country. . . . Shall the natural law of reason, or the arbitrary law of Christianity govern? . . . Religious liberty in America must do battle for its very existence. . . . I appeal to Christians to make no further efforts to fan into flame the dangerous fires of religious bigotry; for, the conflagration, once kindled, they will be powerless to control."

W. F. Jamieson, author of the valuable work entitled, *The Clergy a Source of Danger to the American Republic*, says: "Christianity is not only foreign, but antagonistic to American liberty. Either Christianity or a people's free government must fall. Which shall it be? Let Liberty be overthrown in America and where would it dare to raise its head?"

Will Christians persist in the folly and madness of defying those, in whose minds have been inculcated a fervent longing for liberty, an intense consciousness of right, a thorough belief in political and religious equality, an ardent love of justice and an undying conviction of the (ultimate) triumph of truth?

As Mr. T. B. Wakeman has said: "The question will have to be tried out, which is the real government of the people—the Republic or the Church?"

Will this great Republic survive the contest?

The issue is the life of the Nation!





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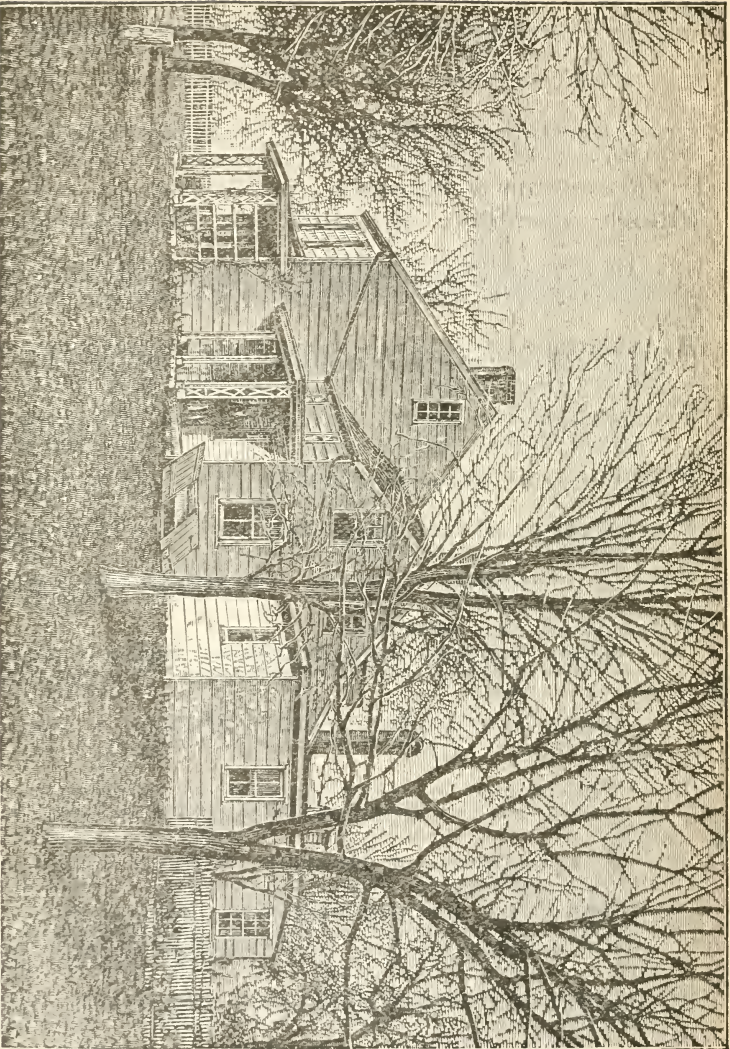
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